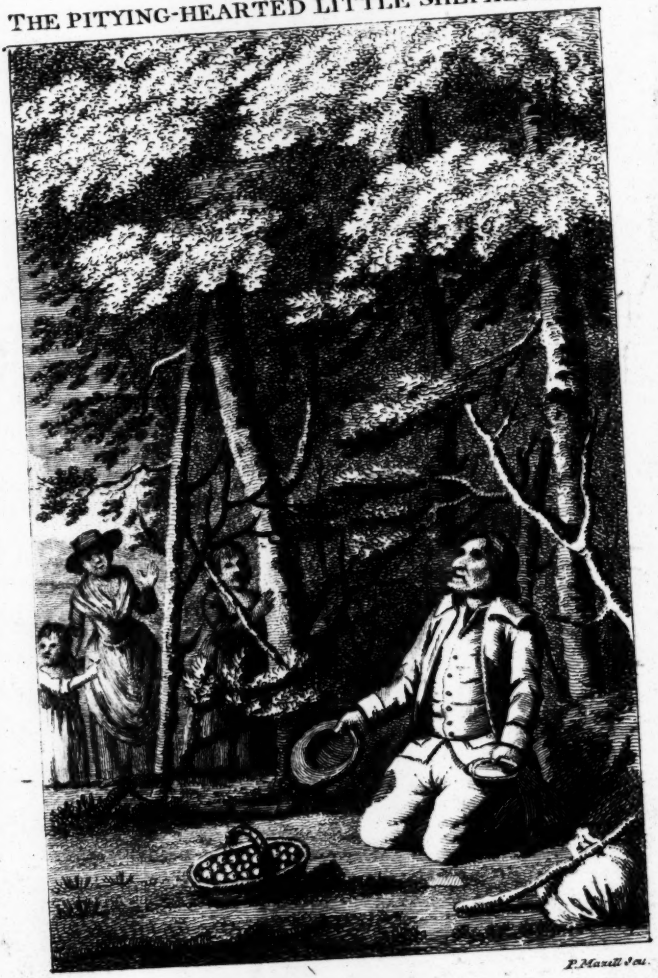
## THE PITYING-HEARTED LITTLE SHEPHERDESS.



P. Mazell Jun.

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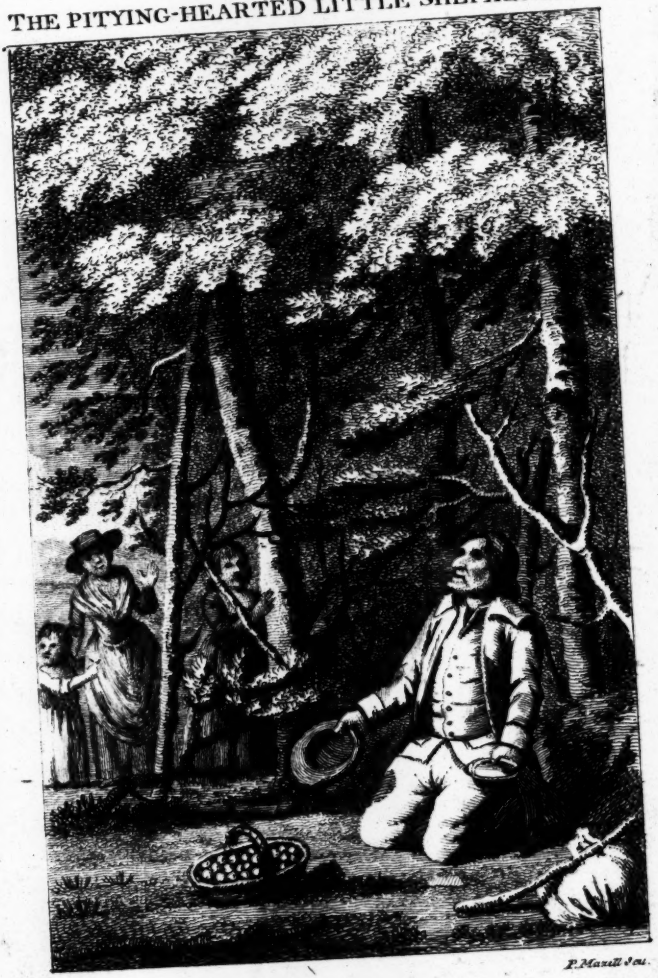

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THE

# FRIEND OF YOUTH;

BEING A SEQUEL TO THE

# CHILDREN'S FRIEND;

AND LIKE THAT WORK,

CONSISTING OF

APT STORIES, ENTERTAINING DIALOGUES,

AND

MORAL DRAMAS:

ALL INTENDED

To excite Attention, cherish Feeling, and inculcate Virtue

IN THE

RISING GENERATION;

Partly translated from Mr. BERQUIN, and other French and German Writers, and partly Original, being written by the Editor himself,

The Rev. MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

Embellished with

COPPER PLATES.

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VOL. I.

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Printed for T. HOOKHAM, in New Bond Street.

D,MCC,LXXXVIII.

*Published by* T. HOOKHAM, *in New Bond Street,*

THE

# CHILDREN'S FRIEND,

In 24 Volumes,

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# PREFACE.

EDUCATION, ſo precious to Humanity, cannot be conſidered under too many aſpects; and it were to be wiſhed, that authors, even thoſe who are moſt celebrated, would not think themſelves above ſuch works as tend to form the riſing generation.

Notwithſtanding ſuch a maſs of writings, (ſays a great philoſopher of theſe our days) that are intended to promote the public good, that firſt GREAT GOOD, which is the art of forming men and women, ſeems entirely forgotten.

What an inundation of Romances daily overflows the land! Romances that tend only to debilitate the ſoul, as ſoon as it is capable of any thing like what we call

PERCEP-

PERCEPTION, and that teach young people nothing but the jargon of refined and ſtudied vice.

Preceptors ſhould inſtruct their pupils for the world, convert inſtruction into paſtime, and ſeduce them as it were to virtue; and we hope this work, however puerile it may appear to ſome, will not be looked upon as ſuch by thoſe who love their children or their ſcholars with that well-directed tenderneſs which is ingenious to effect the happineſs of ſuch an intereſting part of human nature.

M. A. M.

THE PITYING-HEARTED

# LITTLE SHEPHERDESS;

## A PASTORAL.

IMITATED FROM THE

MENALCAS and ALEXIS

OF

GESSNER.

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SCENE.—*A landſcape, interſperſed with trees and underwood.*

DAPHNE. *(looking round her as ſhe enters)* Robin! Robin!—Where can you be got to, Robin?—Should ſhe after all be loſt!—Of every ſheep we have, 'tis Robin we love moſt. —My little ſiſter frequently plays with her. Dolly gives her bread, and ſhe knows Dolly juſt as well as me.—*(Frighten'd)* But what's that noiſe!—If it ſhould be a wolf!—*(She runs away, but ventures to look back; then ſtops, and afterward continues ſpeaking)*—No, no, I ſee a man among the buſhes.—But who is he, for I never ſaw him in our village?—He may be a thief for aught I know; and therefore I will hide myſelf behind this tree.—How melancholy he appears to be! and with what pain he walks along!

An OLD MAN (*appearing and talking to himſelf*). This bundle, as 'tis full of victuals for my poor dear children, ſhould ſeem very light; and yet how it has tired me! (*flinging it on the ground.*)

DAPHNE. He loves children; he will therefore not hurt me.

The OLD MAN. And yet, old age weighs heavier on my ſhoulders. My affection gives me patience; but what uſe is patience of? ſince time has taken all my ſtrength away. Poor children, you muſt think me abſent long. You cry, but do not, I am ſure, accuſe me.—You muſt know, dear babies . . . . I was in the right to diſbelieve you, and did well . . . . If I had brought away the bread I left behind me with you, I ſhould not be hungry now; but you . . . .

DAPHNE. Poor man!—It ſeems then he is hungry.—I am hungry too.

The OLD MAN. Alas! (*looking at the ſun*) 'tis ſix hours now ſince I came out; yes, that at leaſt ſince firſt I left them.—Poſſibly, they may have eat the whole at once! If ſo, they are as badly off at preſent as the birds I ſaw this morning in their neſt. I pity'd the poor little things. Has any one then pity'd mine?

DAPHNE. Oh, I ſhould pity them, for my part, I am ſure.

The OLD MAN. Were I to leave my bundle here, I could then get much ſooner home: but I am loſt, and cannot find my way.

DAPH-

DAPHNE. If I durſt ſhew myſelf, I would direct him.

The OLD MAN. And the ſun will ſoon go down apace.—I ſaw ſome cattle grazing hereabout juſt now. So, when the people come to drive them home, I may enquire the path.—But, in the mean time, my poor children!—'Tis their ſituation grieves me more a great deal than my own.—If I could only ſleep a little—(*he reſts his head upon the bundle*).

DAPHNE. Is he faſt already?—No, he does but doze. And yet he ſeem'd fatigu'd.—Yes, truly, he is quite aſleep. But he is hungry—he ſaid ſo himſelf. Poor man! At leaſt then I muſt let him reſt. Perhaps . . . .

The MOTHER of Daphne (*drawing nigh with* Dorothy, *another of her children; but not yet in ſight*). Daphne! Daphne!

DOROTHY. Siſter! Siſter!

The MOTHER. Daphne!—Do you hear?—Where are you?

DAPHNE. Here, here, mother.

*The mother appears holding Dorothy with one hand, and having a porringer or baſon in the other. Dorothy has a little baſket on her arm, with bread and apples in it.*

The MOTHER. I have found you then at laſt?—But what? How hot you are! You have been running.

DAPHNE. Yes, in ſearch of Robin. I have loſt her.

DOROTHY. No, no, ſiſter; ſhe is in the houſe.

DAPHNE. The houſe? you don't ſay ſo!

DOROTHY. And more than that, came home alone.

DAPHNE. How glad I am! as glad as I was ſorrowful juſt now!

DOROTHY. Yes, you are always feeding Robin! and on that account, ſhe leaves me.

The MOTHER. She was hungry; and you, Daphne, muſt be hungry too; and therefore we have brought you out your dinner—ſo ſit down, my deareſt; and you, Dolly, take your work out.

*(They ſit down on the graſs. Daphne takes the porringer and baſket, thinks a little, and then going forward, puts them both within the old man's reach, who ſtill continues ſleeping.)*

DOROTHY *(ſhewing her work)*. See here, mother: I am wrong, I fancy?

The MOTHER *(looking at it)*. Yes, indeed: ſtay, ſtay a little.

*(Daphne, having got again into her hiding place, keeps watching the old man; and now and then takes up a little bit of dirt, and tries to hit his hand, which having done, ſhe ſays)*

He will fancy it a leaf, or ſome ſuch matter.

*(The old man wakes and turns a little. Daphne ſeems delighted.)*

The MOTHER *(returning Dorothy her work)*. There,—go on.—But where is Daphne gone to

will not eat one: my children ſhall. (*Putting them into his pockets.*)

DAPHNE. I wiſh my mother had brought out as many more; he is ſo careful of his children!

The OLD MAN. But the ſpoon, the porringer, and baſket, what am I to do with?—I need only leave them.—Thoſe who brought the victuals will no doubt return to fetch them.

The MOTHER (*to Daphne*). Ah, my dearest Daphne, how rejoic'd I am to find you ſo compaſſionate a little creature!—Kiſs me.

DAPHNE. My . . .

The MOTHER. Huſh!—He is ſaying ſomething.

The OLD MAN. But my way! my way! who is it will direct me? How ſhall I get home? I will once more attempt to find the path, when I have taken up my load. (*He attempts to get it on his ſhoulders, but wants ſtrength to do ſo.*)

The MOTHER. Let us go help him—or, on ſecond thoughts, ſeem paſſing by as accidentally.—No doubt, he will ſpeak to us.

DAPHNE. Pray don't tell him, mother, it was I that . . . .

The MOTHER. No, no; and do you too, Dolly, hold your tongue.---(*They paſs by the old man.*)

The OLD MAN (*drawing near*). My dear kind lady, hear me.

The

The MOTHER. Well! What would you have, good man?

The OLD MAN. Be ſo obliging as to tell me, which way I muſt go; for I have loſt my way.

The MOTHER. Where do you live?

The OLD MAN. If you would let me know . . . .

The MOTHER. Where do you live, I aſk? Where *would* you go?

The OLD MAN. True, my charming lady; I was never in this *wood* before.

The MOTHER. You are miſtaken. I don't ſpeak about the *wood*. (*To the children*) Poor man! How deaf he is! (*To the old man*) I aſk, where you would wiſh to go?

The OLD MAN. I live at Frogley, in the neighbourhood of Shoreham. Poſſibly you do not know where Frogley is; but be ſo good as to direct me hence to Shoreham: when I once reach Shoreham, I ſhall eaſily find out the way.

The MOTHER. You are not far from Shoreham now. The way, however, is a little difficult to find.

DAPHNE. Let me go with him half a mile or ſo towards Shoreham. (*Drawing near the old man,*) I will ſhew you thither.

The OLD MAN. Will you, my dear little lady? Bleſs your kindneſs; but pray tell me, have you accidentally ſeen any one go by this way?

DAPH-

to, with her dinner?—She has got away again! —Look round about and find her.

(*Dorothy goes to and fro, perceives her ſiſter, and comes back.*)

DAPHNE (*in the interim*). He turns quite the other way.

DOROTHY. See mother.—There ſhe is, and looking through the branches of a pollard.

The MOTHER. (*to Dorothy*) Is it ſo! I ſee the reaſon now then, of her running twice away from dinner. She has found out ſome new neſt I fancy.

DOROTHY. Some new neſt? oh good! Let us go ſee it too.

The MOTHER. Since ſhe has ſhewn herſelf ſo cunning, we muſt diſappoint her, and ſecure it for ourſelves.—What ſay you, Dolly? —Let us make no noiſe, but get behind her unexpectedly.

(*They go round about, intending to ſurprize her.*)

The OLD MAN (*waking*). I cannot have ſlept long, methinks.

DAPHNE. So much the better!

The OLD MAN. 'Tis aſtoniſhing that I could ſleep at all; and that ſo ſhort a ſlumber ſhould have thus refreſhed me.—I am yet, however, no leſs hungry than I was. (*Perceiving the victuals*) But what is this I ſee!— Oh heaven!—I muſt be in a dream, or he who takes care of the little birds has not forgot me.

DAPHNE. Aye; that I remember reading in the Bible.

The OLD MAN. He has ſent his angel to me.

DAPHNE. I ſhall fall a crying.

The OLD MAN. Poſſibly, he may have ſent to feed my children. He has ſeen their innocence, and firſt of all aſſiſted them. (*He takes the porringer, and then pulls off his hat.*) Great God! if I am not entirely unworthy of thy goodneſs, let me praiſe thee for it. (*He begins to eat.*)

DAPHNE. With what appetite he eats!

The MOTHER (*drawing nigh, and ſeeing the old man upon the ground, calls out to Dorothy*), My child! my child! Come hither.

DOROTHY. Well?—what is it, mother?

The MOTHER, (*lifting Dolly up and pointing through the branches.*) Do you ſee there, Dolly?

DOROTHY. He is eating ſiſter's dinner!

The MOTHER. Peace, and kiſs me. You obſerve what Daphne has been doing, and will imitate her when you have occaſion? Do you promiſe me you will?

DOROTHY. Yes, yes, dear mother; and you likewiſe.

The MOTHER. Let us go up to her.

DAPHNE. After this, he will be able to get on.

The OLD MAN (*putting down the porringer and reaching to the baſket*). What? bread and apples! But I find myſelf no longer hungry, and will

DAPHNE. This way?

The OLD MAN. Yes. Can you tell me who it was that brought me victuals?

DAPHNE. Brought you victuals?

The OLD MAN. Yes, while I was faſt aſleep. Here is the porringer and baſket they were in. Did you ſee no one?

DAPHNE. No one.

The OLD MAN. There has notwithſtanding ſome one, my good child, been here, and I ſhould like to find out who it was.

DAPHNE. And why?

The OLD MAN. To bleſs him.

DAPHNE. Bleſs then the whole world, good daddy; and your bleſſing will be ſure to fall on the right perſon.

The MOTHER (*to Dolly, who had taken up the porringer and baſket*). Well, and why do you take up the things?

DOROTHY. To carry them in doors.

The OLD MAN (*remarking this laſt anſwer*), I thought as much, my dear good children. But although you might have hid it from me, you could not have done ſo from that eye obſerving all things. It is he that muſt reward you, and will likewiſe. I did ſomething much leſs noble than what you have done this morning, and his providence has recompenſed me for it by your means.

DAPHNE. And what, pray, did you do then?

The

The OLD MAN. I was cutting wood, and near the ſpot found out a little neſt. The mother, (I believe it was a linnet,) fluttered round me, and ſeemed much diſtreſſed. She durſt not go among her young ones. They were all expecting her with open mouths, becauſe they wanted food. I looked a little at them and bethought me of my children.

DAPHNE. Are your children very little then?

The OLD MAN. My children are all dead. And thoſe I ſpeak of now are orphans they have left behind them. So I pity'd the poor things, and whiſper'd to myſelf as follows; I can eaſily go further and make up my burthen. Upon this, I ſtruck into the wood, and ſcarcely knowing which way I got out, have loſt myſelf. I ſhould by this time ſurely have been dead with want, but for your charity. This charity will not be loſt. 'Tis written here (*laying his hand on his heart*); 'tis written elſewhere likewiſe. The good deeds we do live after us. You are, as yet, too young that you ſhould know all this; but you will find it ſo hereafter. Would you think it? In our neighbourhood there lives a little* lady, ſcarcely older than the youngeſt of you two, that at her tender time of life is wonderfully

* Alluding to a princeſs, for whoſe entertainment Geſſner wrote this little Paſtoral, and had it repreſented. She ſuggeſted to him the idea of it; upon which he worked the thought up into an idyllium, as he calls it.

good,

good. The miſery of others gives her real pain; and when ſhe can, ſhe comforts them in their diſtreſſes. For the good ſhe has already done, ſhe is rewarded. She is bleſſed by every one that knows her. Without promiſing you will exactly imitate her, I dare anſwer you will ſtrive to do ſo; and by ſtriving, make your mother and yourſelves completely happy. Will you help me, madam, to take up my load? I ſcarce dare aſk you, but I cannot take it up myſelf.

The MOTHER. With all my heart, good man.

DAPHNE. Let me aſſiſt you, mother.

DOROTHY. And me likewiſe.

The OLD MAN. Heaven reward your charity. (*To Daphne*) You promiſed you would put me in the way, my little maid.

DAPHNE. Yes, yes; fear nothing. I will ſhew you.

The MOTHER. In returing, Daphne, ſtop not by the way. I will prepare you ſomething good for dinner. You muſt certainly be hungry.

DAPHNE. No, dear mother; on the other hand, by parting with my dinner, I have given myſelf a deal of pleaſure--This way, daddy, this way.

THE

# THE THUNDERBOLT AND CLOUD.

## A FABLE.

THE ſun was ſunk; and o'er the world,
Jove all his ſtorms together hurl'd;
Loud thunders rent the frighted ear,
And lightnings ſeem'd to ſcorch the ſphere.
Their fluicy ſtores the clouds pour'd down,
The labours of the plain to drown!
The winds burſt forth with loud affray,
And o'er earth's ſurface ſwept their way;
While in the univerſal dread,
Men, herds, and fowl to covert ſped.
While thus the world, in wild affright,
Enjoy'd not the repoſe of night,
A thunderbolt began to roll,
With rumbling ſound from pole to pole:
But in its progreſs, to a cloud,
Hung o'er the earth, thus cried aloud:
Dar'ſt thou, vile maſs of vapours, ſay,
In the wide heavens thus thwart my way?
What art thou made of, tho' the ſun
Rais'd thee from earth, where now thou'rt hung:
And for nobility with me,
Tho' thou dar'ſt urge thy mad-brain'd plea?
Doſt thou not mark the lightning's force,
How it precedes my rapid courſe?
Doſt thou not ſee the hills even ſhake,
When o'er their tops my way I take?

I am

I am Jove's voice, and frequent's hurl'd,
Vindictive round a guilty world.
What then the wonder, if whene'er
Cleaving as now the vacant air,
Thro' the wide vault my voice I rear,
Nature herſelf is chill'd with fear?
This is my boaſt; while thou—Aye I,
Such was the humble cloud's reply,
I, of ſelf-praiſe the boaſted ſtrain,
Loud thus and long pour'd out, diſdain.
Yet muſt I ſay, ſince thus defied,
Elſe would the vaunt ſeem ſprung from pride,
When, as at preſent, I deſcend
Thus near the earth, I prove man's friend;
Since with my copious ſtores of rain,
Timely I'm preſent to reſtrain
What thou wouldſt miſchievous perform,
Thou and thy partner in the ſtorm:
Thou and that lightning, whoſe dire force
Marſhals thy all-deſtructive courſe.
Safe from one conflagration, I
Keep the vaſt ſphere of earth and ſky;
Since the whole globe and ſtarry frame
Thou wouldſt enwrap in general flame.
This have I now in charge to do;
This of thy murderous ſchemes the view.
And, when, beſides, what time the vault
Fears not thy bolt with ruin fraught,
Born from the South ſome mid-day gale
Brings near the earth my fleecy veil,
Pleas'd, I behold the lab'ring hind
Bleſs the kind gods that bleſs mankind:

Water'd by me, his fields increaſe,
And his heart ſmiles with joy and peace.
They, who, like heaven, poſſeſs a place
Rais'd o'er the reſt of human race,
Should from their height, well pleas'd, let fall,
Natively good, their gifts on all;
Nor, with a tyrant's impious joy,
Cruelly great, their kind deſtroy.

---

THE

## UNGRACIOUS SON Reclaim'd.

Mr. LOVELACE; two of his FRIENDS; a STRANGER, and a LITTLE BOY.

MR. LOVELACE *(putting up the cards, with which the company had juſt been playing.)* So then every thing is ſettled; and my winnings are juſt four and ſix-pence.

The STRANGER. I have loſt a crown. A crown, and ſo much time into the bargain.

FIRST FRIEND. Which is worth about — three halfpence more.

The STRANGER. Methinks you might have ſet my time down at a certain perſon's wages.

Mr. LOVELACE. Well, give me a game at cards. One benefit attending it is this: that it prevents ſome fallings out, though poſſibly it may

may occaſion others. When your hands were full, you were good neighbours.

FIRST FRIEND. You muſt know, my friend is a philoſopher; he never plays, but from compaſſion to the company, that ſcandal may not circulate among them.

The STRANGER. I had pleaſed myſelf, I muſt confeſs, with thinking how much entertainment I ſhould gather from the company and converſation of a gentleman of ſo much ſpirit as the maſter of the houſe had been deſcribed to me,

Mr. LOVELACE. You compliment me, ſir.

The STRANGER. No, on my honour. But no matter. All the miſchief is now over. To my money you are welcome, I ſhould only like to have my time reſtored.

FIRST STRANGER. With all our hearts; your crown is all we wanted. But, friend Jack, ſince it appears you put ſo great a value on your time, remember we have ſtill ſome portion of the evening we may ſpend according to your notion, properly, that is, in converſation. We have ſtill an hour in hand.

SECOND FRIEND. Aye, aye; but recollect, no women that you know ſo frequently excel in oratory; they would certainly keep up the converſation.

FIRST FRIEND. Well ſaid, Harry!

Mr. LOVELACE. But the gentleman, as he has ſuch a great antipathy to cards, may reaſonably be expected to ſtart topics, and keep up that converſation he declares himſelf ſo

fond of. Now, amongſt ſuch friends as are of any ſtanding, how can one be always ſo ingenious as to ſtart freſh ſubjects?

The STRANGER. With ſubmiſſion, ſir, we have before our eyes, at all times, ſomething or another that will amply furniſh us with ſubjects. For example's ſake, this little gentleman.—Come hither, my good man.—Who could keep company a quarter of an hour with ſuch a lovely fellow, and be tongue-tied? I quote this, as one alone among a multitude of means that may be thought of to ſet folks a gabbling.—*(To Mr. Lovelace)* Is he yours, ſir?

Mr. LOVELACE. I have frequently been told ſo, by his mother.

The STRANGER. And you need ſuch information? Happily for you, ſir, the delight with which you view him, tells me otherwiſe. *(To the child)* My little fellow, do you know which of the company is your papa?

The CHILD. Aye, that I do.

Mr. LOVELACE. And who pray has ſo great an honour?

The CHILD. Who? Why who but you, papa?

Mr. LOVELACE. The truth is, I have ſhewn him now and then ſome kindneſs, juſt as if I thought him mine.

The CHILD. Aye, ſo you have; and you ſhall ſhow me more, I warrant you, papa.

The STRANGER. There's for you: but, my little dear, what makes you view me with ſuch

ſuch earneſtneſs, as if I were an old acquaintance! Do you like me?

The CHILD. No.

The STRANGER. Not like me! and why pray?

The CHILD. Becauſe your face is rumpled.

Mr. LOVELACE. Oh fye, Charles! If you had had the ſmall pox ſo, your face would likewiſe be as rumpled, as you call it.

SECOND FRIEND. Let *me* have a little converſation with you.---I obſerve, my dear... Aye, what, pray, is it I obſerve?

The CHILD. Obſerve! pray what does that mean?

SECOND FRIEND. Why it means the ſame as if a perſon were to ſay, I *ſee*. Now tell me what I ſee?

The CHILD. See?---Nothing. You don't ſee; you ſquint. (*They all laugh.*)

SECOND FRIEND. You little urchin! You ſhould notwithſtanding ſay, I ſee.

The CHILD. No. I ſhould tell a ſtory then; for Mr. What-d'ye-call-him knows you ſquint.---Pray don't he?

Mr. LOVELACE. Charles! What now? Have done, ſir.

The STRANGER. It is I am the occaſion of all this; and I ſhall get my little friend into diſgrace. So, gentlefolks, with your permiſſion, for twenty minutes, reaſonable enter-

tainment, I will read a letter which a gentleman this morning put into my hand. He ſaid he had received it from the writer------(Here it is)------and as he thought it was uncommonly affecting, copied it; but leaving out the names, for which I did not aſk him.---Shall I read it?

FIRST FRIEND. Certainly.

Mr. LOVELACE. By all means.

SECOND FRIEND. We will be as mute as fiſhes.

The STRANGER. Here is to begin then---Hem! hem! hem! (*he reads*) "A Letter from a father, on the unnatural conduct of his ſon.

I am infirm, bent down with years, and baniſhed here into a country, where I have no other more acceptable ſociety than my old age, and where I am abandoned to a mercenary ſervant, deſtitute of common charity, without conſideration for my helpleſs ſtate, and always certain to forget me, when I am not troubleſome, or do not put his ſurly nature out of patience by inſiſting on my right to ſome attention. I am here, in ſhort, without the leaſt ſupport, except the pity this unfeeling ſervant ought to ſhew me; but, of which he has ſo little, that he aggravates the grievous ſituation I am left in by his maſter. Shall I tell you what is now to follow? I muſt do ſo, ſir, ſince 'tis the circumſtance that moſt afflicts me, and, indeed, that conſtitutes the bitterneſs of my diſtreſs.—This maſter I have juſt now mentioned is my ſon.

I am

I am perſuaded, my condition moves you; yet whatever be the bounty of your heart, you cannot have a perfect ſenſe thereof. You ſhould be wholly in my ſituation; you ſhould be a father as myſelf am, to conceive how much I ſuffer.

'Tis a great unhappineſs, no doubt, for one ſo old as I am, to become the ridicule of thoſe about him; or be left entirely at the mercy of ſuch people as are neither his relations, friends, or neighbours. Grievous is it for him to be conſcious he has none that will humanely intereſt their feelings in his favour, and aſſiſt him to endure with patience the remainder of his life, in which he is, and of neceſſity muſt be, a burthen to himſelf. In ſuch a ſituation, my dear friend, I ſay again, a man is truly to be pitied. In a word, he ſuffers greatly, and then dies. But be perſuaded that the miſerable ſtate of ſuch a man is nothing in compariſon of mine, if he ſhould have no children—if God's providence ſhould not have made him the unhappy father of a child who can renounce him.

No; 'tis nothing to be left of all men, and have only to lament their want of kindneſs, and compaſſion. 'Tis not to be wondered at, that men in general ſhould have no pity. They are nothing to you; and if even they compaſſionate your ſituation, you muſt teaze them, as it were, to do ſo. Though they do not pity *you*, they may have ſome humanity for others; and

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in caſe you were not in affliction, you would not expect compaſſion from them.

But conſider what a ſon ſhould be! Think how a father ought to look upon him, and what certainly he may expect he ſhould perform! In God's name, is a ſon the ſame as any other human being to a father? It is here expreſſion fails me; and my heart ſinks down entirely overwhelmed with anguiſh. 'Tis in this reſpect I ſuffer what one cannot with propriety call ſorrow or deſpair, and nothing more; but what is infinitely worſe.—Yes, yes; one may be ſaid to live, and have ſome ſort of hope in ſorrow or deſpair; but I, ſir, am no otherwiſe connected with exiſtence and mankind than by a ſadneſs that annihilates my ſoul, and leaves me without hope. Mankind renounce me; and in ſuch a ſituation, 'tis but men that do ſo: but my ſon renounces me; and that is juſt as if I were renounced by nature. He was all my ſuccour and ſupport;——a ſuccour and ſupport, which nothing, I ſuppoſed, could poſſibly deprive me of;——a ſuccour and ſupport, that, as I thought, I could command whenever I ſhould be in want;——a ſuccour and ſupport, which, I imagined, independent on the kindneſs or humanity of men. If he were generous or no, what mattered that to me? for nature, prejudice itſelf, the education fathers commonly beſtow upon their children, and the tenderneſs with which they bring them up, all theſe enſured

ſured me, as I thought, his love. I looked upon it as my own; and fancied every thing ſhould have excepted me from other men within his heart. Suppoſing he had been devoid of honour in his dealings with the world, he was connected in much ſtronger ties to me. Suppoſing him a wretch, moſt hateful to the world at large, could I have hated him, or therefore leſs conſidered him my ſon? To have our love, do we expect our children, by their morals, ſhould deſerve it? What effect, alas, has their bad character upon us? It may very poſſibly afflict, but does not alienate us.

Yes, dear ſon, ſtill dear, though you have utterly forgot your father——from the depth to which you have reduced me, and in which I languiſh, 'tis my love that thus complains. You have not quenched *that* in me; for 'tis that alone remonſtrates on account of your behaviour. Life is grown a burthen to me, for no other reaſon than becauſe I love you ſtill as much as I have always loved you. No; I ſuffer only as 'tis you that give me pain. Your heart no longer knows me, but *my* heart ſtill overflows with its affection. I have not been able to forget I am your father; how have you been able to forget you are my ſon? There is no longer any object then belonging to me in all nature. All is ſunder'd from me. I ſee nothing but a deſert on whatever ſide I turn my obſervation. I am in the world, a ſtranger to it, and unnoticed by a ſon, whom I regret and

and call to my aſſiſtance, but who will not hear.

And yet, what is it I have done againſt this ſon? Of half a dozen children I had once, he is the only one now left me. I was never rich; but then, I loved him tenderly; and in the education I beſtowed upon him, my œconomy and induſtry ſupplied the place of riches. His improvement equalled my deſire. I ſent him to the Univerſity for further learning; and denied myſelf even neceſſaries, to ſupport him there."——

*(Here Lovelace is diſcovered ſomewhat agitated; but the Company, deſirous as they ſeem to hear the letter, and not dreaming at what individual it is levell'd, do not ſee it.)*

——"To ſay the truth, he made ſo great a progreſs while at college, as to gain the friendſhip and eſteem of thoſe who knew him; and, his figure being rather recommendable, a lady noticed him, and formed ſo advantageous an idea of his merit, as to offer him her daughter for a wife, if he had any thing. Whatever he could hope for was with me. My whole eſtate conſiſted of two little farms; of which, one came to me upon my father's death-bed, and the other I had purchaſed. Both together had till now ſubſiſted us, with great œconomy upon my part.

He wrote me the propoſals of the lady, pointed out what great advantages would follow from the match, and added that his happineſs was in my

my hands. Alas! it could not be in better. I ſet out for Oxford, and agreed at once to give him half my little property immediately, and the remaining half at my deceaſe.

He married quickly after, and launched forth into a line of buſineſs, ſuch as he had previouſly made choice of. His poor wife was taken from him the next year in child-birth. At her death, I underwent a real loſs: ſhe loved me, and on my part, never while I live ſhall I forget her.

She had not been dead above three months, when, as my ſon informed me, he had need of nearly eighteen hundred pounds, for certain purpoſes, but which I will not now detain you by relating. Of theſe eighteen hundred pounds he borrowed upwards of two thirds, but could not get the reſt in ſuch a way. At that time I was pleaſed with his behaviour; I imagined him more anxious for my happineſs than I myſelf was; and in ſelling the remainder of my property, to make the ſum up, I imagined I ſhould only change the nature of it.

I did ſell it, therefore, as he wiſhed; and gave it him without requiring any thing by way of what is called ſecurity. We ſettled the affair without the intervention of one witneſs: the whole money was employed according to his views, and the intentions he had formed, ſucceeded even more than he had thought they would do. He was now grown wealthy, and gave over buſineſs; fell into another way of life, and to thoſe honeſt friends he had till now conſorted with, ſoon added others much more

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conſequential. He got rid of thoſe old friends, whoſe intimacy in his thought diſgraced him, and began at laſt to bluſh at being called my ſon.

This alteration I perceived; but thought myſelf at firſt miſtaken. Much about that time I happened to be taken ill, and ſaw he ſlighted me. His ſervants, following the example, often would neglect me likewiſe, and this gave me real pain. I begged to ſee him in my chamber, which he had not entered for five days before. He came: I told him with how little care I was attended. You are very difficult, I fancy, father, was his anſwer.——This is the firſt time you ever told me ſo, ſaid I, and your behaviour hurts me.——It was ſurely not worth while, ſir, to take all this trouble, anſwered he, that you might pick a quarrel with me, as you do with every body. You are taken all the care of you ſhould wiſh for, and yet always grumble. What can I do in the caſe? Endeavour to get better; and when once your health is re-eſtabliſhed, I adviſe you to go down into the country. You will be much happier there than here, and live according to your fancy. I am in a way of life that does not ſuit you, and when ſeparated, we ſhall not be always bickering with each other.

Having ſaid thus much, he quitted the apartment, while a footman, who had heard him, turned away his head and laughed.

My ſon's behaviour ſhocked me, but the ſervant's pierced my heart. I ſaw how ſad a

ſtate

ſtate I was redueed to; and could comprehend I was become no better than a ſtranger in the houſe of my own ſon. For ſome time after that I kept my bed. When I was better, I got up: my ſtrength by this time was reſtored a little, and I dreſſed myſelf as well as I was able; for my clothes were not in very good condition. I had never mentioned any thing about them to my ſon; and he had not thought proper, of his own accord, to recommend my having others. They were going to ſit down to dinner, and I called out for a ſervant to aſſiſt me in deſcending. They replied, but not a ſoul appeared. I tried then to proceed myſelf, ſupported by my cane; but hardly had got half way down, before my ſon came out from his apartment. What are you about, ſaid he? What meggot takes you? I have company to-day, and are you fit to come among them? Do you fear we ſhall not ſend you up your dinner? Take my father back to his apartment, ſaid he to a ſervant, and went in. For my part, I was motionleſs.

The footman helped me to go up again; and, with a ſneer, inſinuated I was yet a chicken, as he ſaid. I made no anſwer to this fellow, who inſulted me by ſuch a ſpeech, while he was doing what his maſter bade him. Grief indeed had cloſed my lips up. I re-entered my apartment, like a man who knows not where he is. I thought I ſhould have fainted, and deſired to have a glaſs of wine. It was not

brought me till near twenty minutes after, when my dinner likewiſe came; but which I could not eat.

I wore the day out, in a ſtate of mind one may imagine better than deſcribe. My ſighs and tears were mixed together. Whither ſhall I go! was my inceſſant exclamation. I have nothing in the world I can call mine. No houſe, no clothes, no money. I am robbed of every thing.

However, when I went to bed, it was my reſolution to bid farewel to my ſon and every thing belonging to him. I deſigned to viſit a kind friend, inform him of my ſituation, and deſire advice. With this intention, I got up next morning much before my uſual hour, and dreſſed.

My ſon muſt have been told what I was doing; for he came into my room, or rather met me at the door, as I was going out, and ſtopped me. What new whim is this, ſaid he, and what do you intend by getting up ſo early, father?—I am going, I made anſwer, to ſome charitable friend or other, who will give me bread, and let me eat it comfortably. I have nothing I can call my own. You know it. My affection has completely ſtripped me. I muſt go before my clothes are worn to tatters, and not ſtay till I am under the neceſſity of aſking for a blanket to throw over me, that I may leave your houſe."——

The LITTLE BOY *(interrupting)*. And do you

you think, ſir, ſhould he ſtay till all his clothes are worn to tatters, that the bad man will then let him have a blanket?

The STRANGER. He would hardly, I ſuppoſe, deny him that, my little fellow.

The LITTLE BOY. Oh, if I were the bad man, I would.

The STRANGER. You would?

The LITTLE BOY. Yes, that I would. I would but give him half a blanket.

The STRANGER. Half a blanket!

The LITTLE BOY. No. I would lay by the other half, that when I had a ſon myſelf, and were obliged to leave him like this poor old man that you are reading of, I might have ſomething to throw over my own ſhoulders.

(*At this remark, the embarraſſment of Lovelace viſibly encreaſes, and he cannot lift his head up.*)

The STRANGER (*turning to the reſt*). Did you ever hear the like?

FIRST FRIEND. A ſhrewd remark indeed: but finiſh.

The STRANGER. Where did I break off? ——O here——"That I may leave your houſe. Fine arguing this, ſaid he! What whims and fancies you old people always have! So you are vaſtly hurt at what I told you yeſterday.——Dear ſon, ſaid I, you have already hurt my mind ſufficiently. Let me be gone without another word between us: every ſyllable you utter is a dagger to my heart. You

cannot tell how much you make me ſuffer.——Oh, a truce to all this nonſenſe, anſwered he. There are a thouſand things you might have intimated to yourſelf"——(*Lovelace riſes.*)

FIRST FRIEND. What now ?---'Tis almoſt finiſhed---Won't you ſtay and hear it ? (*He goes out without replying.*)

The STRANGER. What's the matter ?

FIRST FRIEND. He muſt ſure be ill. He did not anſwer when I ſpoke. My little man, do you know where papa is gone.

The LITTLE BOY. No, ſir.

SECOND FRIEND. Well, let him loſe it if he chuſes. You had beſt go on, ſir. Is it nearly finiſhed ?

The STRANGER. All, excepting half a page, or thereabouts. (*Continues reading*) " There are a thouſand things you might have intimated to yourſelf, and ſpared us both a deal of trouble. You are old and ailing. You have lived a great deal in the country, and your notions and behaviour do not ſuit with London. You ſhould firſt of all yourſelf have wiſhed to keep away from ſuch as viſit here. A fine thing truly for me to behold you talking with polite and well-bred people that your oddities are ſure to ſet a laughing ! For the caſe is ſo. Can you ſuppoſe this pleaſes me ? And yet, you will be always thruſting in your noſe where no one wants you. There can be no need that we ſhould quarrel with each other, or you worry any one with your complainings. I will

I will inſtantly give orders for a chaiſe to take you down to Norfolk. You may have my country houſe there, to do with it what you like. From time to time I will be ſure to come and ſee you; ſo farewel. You ſhall ſet out immediately; and I muſt be about my buſineſs in the city.

It was thus we parted, ſir. He quitted me without embarraſſment, without the leaſt kind word, excepting that of *father*, which his lips indeed pronounced, but which he felt not in his heart. He went away without the leaſt emotion, either at my languid ſtate of mind, or at the tears I ſhed, or at the mournful ſilence I reſigned myſelf to. Quickly after, came a ſervant to pack up my things: they hurried me down ſtairs, and I was put into a chaiſe that brought me here, where I have now been languiſhing theſe two years paſt and upward, where my ſon has never once appeared according to his word, and where I live without the comforts, and even ſometimes neceſſary things of life." — And that's the whole.

FIRST FRIEND. A very moving letter!

SECOND FRIEND. Which we thank you for, ſir.

The LITTLE BOY. It has made me cry.

The STRANGER. Poor little fellow! But our hoſt? I fancy he is gone to weep alone. He ſeemed affected, if I ſaw things properly, while I was reading.

FIRST FRIEND. Yes, he did ſo. His e-

motions were quite viſible. He has himſelf a father, you muſt know; and were it not for that good underſtanding I have always taken notice of between them, I ſhould really ſuppoſe this letter had excited in him ſomething more than pity.---I ſincerely hope——

SECOND FRIEND. Hope! what? They are upon the beſt of terms together; and report, that always aggravates miſunderſtandings between thoſe that ought to live with each other with the greateſt cordiality, was never known to ſpeak in prejudice of Lovelace. There was nothing in the letter perſonal reſpecting him.

The STRANGER. I hope there was not, for three reaſons: for your friend's ſake; for his father's, as you ſay; and for my own: but who comes here?

A SERVANT (*coming in*). A letter from my maſter, gentlemen. It is for you, ſir (*to the ſtranger*).

The STRANGER. Me! a letter! What can this mean? (*Opening it and reading to himſelf.*)

The SERVANT. I was bid to tell you likewiſe, ſupper will be ready by the time you may have read the letter. Maſter Charly, you muſt go to bed. (*To the company*) I ſhall return, and light you to the ſupper room, when I have ſeen the little boy up ſtairs.

The LITTLE BOY. Good night. (*He goes out with the ſervant.*)

The STRANGER. Here is a letter I muſt read,

read, it ſeems, before we quit the room. 'Tis wrote by Mr. Lovelace in a hurry, as he ſays, and well worth hearing through.

FIRST FRIEND. My mind miſgives me!

SECOND FRIEND. 'Tis impoſſible! but let us hear it.

The STRANGER (*reading*). "You have ended, my good ſir, a worthy but unhappy father's ſorrows; and reclaimed from further guilt, and very likely ruin, his ungracious ſon. I write this letter, and the incloſed, as well as I am able, in the greateſt hurry and remorſe of conſcience. Providence has will'd you ſhould have read your letter in my hearing. It was written by my father, and each paſſage in it is a truth. It is, as I believe, the only mention he has ever made of his diſtreſsful caſe to any one; for he was wont to keep his ſorrows to himſelf; and I, as you may very eaſily ſuppoſe, was never likely to make public my unfilial-like deportment. Hence that fair report beſtowed upon me, as a ſon, by all that know us. Read this letter to my friends with you below, as well as that within it. I am ſo much agitated, that I cannot poſſibly return this evening to you; but be chearful in my abſence. I requeſt it of you. I could ſay much more, but have not time. When you have read the incloſed, pray ſeal and let the poſtman have it. I can hear him ringing in the ſtreet, at preſent. My poor father ought to look upon you as his guardian angel. Saying

ing this, I need not add another ſyllable, or end with any compliment, however cuſtomary at the cloſe of letters.

Your's ſir, therefore, briefly,

HENRY LOVELACE."

Thus much, gentlemen, for one; and now for the incloſed. (*He reads again.*)

"To HENRY LOVELACE, Eſq. at Diſs, in Norfolk.

Deareſt Father,

Providence has ſhown me the unworthineſs of my behaviour to the beſt of parents; but your ſorrows are now ended. I will come down, poſt, to-morrow morning. Think of ſeeing me next day at fartheſt. I will keep my word; and on my knees aſſure you that you ſhall not find me for the future any other than your grateful ſon. This declaration I ſhall make with pleaſure; and 'tis not without a ſecret ſatisfaction I inform you how much I am now convinced I have been till this moment,

Your ungracious

HENRY LOVELACE."

The STRANGER. Well, what think you?

FIRST FRIEND. I began to doubt as much.

SECOND FRIEND. I am aſtoniſhed; and can ſcarcely credit what I hear! (*The ſervant returns.*)

FIRST FRIEND. But we are waited for; we can talk over this ſtrange matter as we ſit at ſupper.

THE

# THE SORCERY OF CUSTOM.

THE maſter of a veſſel from Japan was forced by ſtreſs of weather to that part of India, nigh the Ganges, where it falls into the ſea. His ſhip was ſo much damaged as to need repair: while this was going on, the Japaneſe amuſed his curioſity at intervals, by viſiting the capital, as well as other places nigh the port. One day, he ſtrayed into a public place, where all the converſation turned upon a beautiful young woman, that in two days' time at furtheſt was to burn herſelf beſide the body of her huſband, who had died the day before. He never heard of ſuch a horrid cuſtom; therefore, notwithſtanding he was well acquainted with the language, he ſuppoſed he had miſunderſtood the matter, and enquired if it was ſo in fact. The perſon he addreſs'd made anſwer in the affirmative; and added, that in two days' time they were to loſe the loveliеſt widow ever ſeen. This mode of burning was a cuſtom, he continued, prevalent in every part of India, and though women were not forc'd upon it, there were ſome, who would not upon any terms be ſo unfaſhionable as to live when they had loſt their huſbands. Such a barbarous cuſtom very much ſurpriſed and ſhocked the Japaneſe, who wiſhed

wiſhed to have an introduction to the widow. Such was the deſcription of her charms, that very probably he would have rather wiſhed ſhe ſhould have gone for conſolation to the living, than thus mingle with the dead. The introduction he obtained, and had the pleaſure too of being well received. He found the Indian with her waiting women and relations round about her; and, however ſtrange it ſeems, ſhe was as cheerful as if nothing of the kind was to befal her. He apologized for having taken ſuch a freedom as to introduce himſelf. She anſwered, and excuſed it quite politely. In the end, when many compliments had paſſed between them both, the Japaneſe and Indian entered on the following converſation.

The JAPANESE. What! and is it true then? Will you abſolutely burn yourſelf alive in two days time, becauſe your huſband is deceaſed? It makes one's hair ſtand up on end; and therefore, I would not at firſt believe it.

The INDIAN. And yet nothing can be truer. The Chief Bramin has already promiſed me, he will attend the ceremony in the utmoſt ſtate, and light the fire himſelf, that is to burn me. Such a promiſe highly honours me, you may be certain.

The JAPANESE. Certain, madam! Really I do not underſtand you. I am willing to allow the greater honour there would be in dying rather by a Bramin's hand than any other's; though, for my part, it would be a matter of indifference

difference to me, were I to be broiled, who made the fire. But can one talk with ſuch tranquillity about ſo cruel and ſo near a death?---No doubt you lov'd your huſband very greatly.

The INDIAN. As for that, ſir,---but ſo ſo; no further. He was well enough, and I was married to him at a time I little thought of ſuch a matter: but my parents made the match and I had no objection. He was tolerably kind, I muſt acknowledge, for the eighteen months we lived together. He was neither jealous, covetous, or ſurly; he was neither very loving or the contrary. In ſhort, I was accuſtomed to him, and that, ſir, is all.

The JAPANESE. And therefore you will burn yourſelf on his account?

The INDIAN. On his account!---No, no--Not quite ſo much as that. It is a cuſtomary matter here, and all the faſhion.---When a huſband dies, his widow ought not to ſurvive him many days. A well-bred woman that ſhould do ſo, would be hooted in all companies: they would behold her with no leſs contempt than indignation; and beſides, ſir, Brama, who firſt willed this ſacrifice, would be offended, where his followers to withhold it.

The JAPANESE. Aye, I thought as much, and might have eaſily imagined there was ſomething of this *Braminology*, if I may ſay ſo, at the bottom of the affair. No doubt your Bramins give you charming pictures of the happineſs that waits you in another life; exaggerate the

the merit there muſt be in broiling, as I ſaid juſt now, and following a dead huſband's carcaſe; and exalt a widow who can boaſt herſelf poſſeſs'd of ſuch a barbarous intrepidity, above even thoſe, who, for the greater glory of this Brama, have been pleaſed to ſtick their ſophas full of tenterhooks, that they might never loll upon it at their eaſe.

The INDIAN. A Bramin, who is very eloquent, and has the good opinion too of every faſhionable woman here, has ſaid a deal to me upon this head. As I am told, for I aſſure you I took little notice of him, he ſpoke charmingly of Brama, and the glory ſuch a ſacrifice would unavoidably be to him: but for my part, I can hardly think the zeal we are ſuppoſed to have on this occaſion for religion, makes us burn ourſelves. That motive may indeed be very efficacious with the lower ſort of women, who believe whatever they are told. But with reſpect to us of rank and conſequence, 'tis cuſtom or the faſhion, that directs us; 'tis the fear of that diſgrace *they* always undergo, who ſhun this kind of death.

The JAPANESE. But this idea is extravagant. A woman who denies the ſtate thoſe children ſhe ſhould bring into the world; or, if you pleaſe, a man who ſhuns the honourable ties of marriage, may be looked on with contempt. That is but juſtice, or at leaſt a maxim, the belief of which is uſeful to the ſtate; and it involves no principle deſtructive to the morals of a people;

ple; but that gay and charming women ſhould be thought diſhonourable in men's eyes, becauſe they may not give up life when they are ſenſible they ſhould enjoy it and make others happy;—That, in my idea, ſeems abſurd and frightful.

The INDIAN. No one, I muſt own, can reaſon better; but to change the ſubject, I believe you are a Japaneſe?

The JAPANESE. Yes, I have that honour, Madam.

The INDIAN. Well, then; I have frequently been told that at Japan, when any one receives an inſult from another, the moſt honourable vengeance is, that the inſulted, with his ſcimiter, ſhould rip up his own belly*, which obliges his antagoniſt to imitate him: and that both, ſhould they refuſe to do ſo, would be infamous for ever. Is this true, ſir?

The JAPANESE. Doubtleſs, Madam: and for my part, I that am now ſpeaking to you, would be ſure to rip myſelf up with as little heſitation, as if any one ſhould challenge me to drink a glaſs of ſherbet in his company, on having a worſe appellation given me than my name.

The INDIAN. You will acknowledge this is quite ridiculous and cruel?

* This was in reality a cuſtom at Japan. See the Reverend Miſſionary *Daubichon*'s third letter to the Biſhop of Meaux, in page 79.

The JAPANESE. Be it ſo: but then 'tis neceſſary for the preſervation of one's honour, which is ſomething, you will certainly allow. Beſides, there muſt be a ſublimity of courage, an heroic reſolution in thus ſcorning death.

The INDIAN. But tell me; do the Japaneſe diſſent from others in aſſerting that men's honour is not founded upon virtue? Do they fancy that fidelity and juſtice are ſo vulgar that mankind need not conſider them as honourable?

The JAPANESE. No indeed.

The INDIAN. Do men of ſenſe among you entertain reſpect for vicious characters, when they are dead, becauſe they ripp'd themſelves up, rather than ſurvive an inſult which perhaps they had deſerved?

The JAPANESE. Oh no I tell you. On the other hand, they think them fools for dying thus, when they could loſe no honour by determining to live.

The INDIAN. A Pondicherry-merchant told me once, as I remember, that in Europe 'tis enough to call a liar by his name, if you would have the opportunity of killing him, or run the riſque of being killed yourſelf by him in what they call a duel.

The JAPANESE. I have heard as much myſelf, and think ſuch people downright fools. A falſity is not leſs ſo, tho' he who called it by the name it ſhould have, has been put to death.

The INDIAN. Acknowledge then that you are

are in the wrong to rip yourſelf up when inſulted, ſince 'tis quite ridiculous to fancy that the fault or crime of any other man degrades your character; and I too will acknowledge that there can be nothing more extravagant and horrible, than for a woman to become (as I ſhall) my own executioner, for one I never loved; and outrage the Divinity by ſuch a ſacrifice. The faſhion, popular opinion, cuſtom, or whatever elſe you pleaſe to name it, guides us all.—Europeans, Japaneſe, and Indians, we purſue its dictates or caprices: they have not even common ſenſe to plead in their behalf; and yet, I ſhall not have the leſs deſire to burn myſelf.

The JAPANESE. Well you are in the right; and I, too, promiſe, I will be as ready when needs be, to rip myſelf up, and ſo vindicate my honour.

# A FUNERAL ORATION OVER POVERTY AND VIRTUE.

IT is not thoſe great men that fortune has capriciouſly thought fit to overload with titles and diſtinctions; neither is it thoſe rich men who, proud of their abundance, inſolently trample on the honeſt poor, and make them inſtruments to aggrandize their own good fortune; neither is it thoſe ungrateful ones who, elevated in the boaſt of their proſperity, have violated every right of friendſhip:—no; it is not theſe that, when they die, produce the greateſt chaſms in ſociety, or cauſe the greateſt ſorrow. On the other hand, it is that claſs of upright, and though humble, yet kind-hearted men who can oblige, yet not be oſtentatious, and can love, yet not debaſe the nobleſt of all feelings with the meaneſt of all paſſions, namely, intereſt:—I repeat, it is that claſs of men by whom the wealthy live, but whom they tread upon, that merit, when they die, the tears of ſenſibility; and ſuch a one was he who, ſome few weeks ago, attracted every one's attention in a town I paſſed thro', being on my travels

travels in the Auſtrian Netherlands. I was aſtoniſhed to obſerve the people of the place repair in ſilence to their pariſh church, with downcaſt looks, and in the figurative ſenſe of the expreſſion, drowned in tears. The ſingularity of the appearance ſtruck me; and I followed them. I ſaw upon the brick-work pavement of this ruſtic edifice the body of a man, whoſe dreſs informed me he had been a peaſant, and whoſe countenance was even yet reſpectable. As ſoon as all the congregation had aſſumed their ſeats, the miniſter got up into his pulpit, and pronounced this ſhort, but yet pathetical oration, which (ſo ſtrongly it impreſſed me) I retained, till coming to my inn at night, I put it down on paper:

"My dear fellow-villagers," ſaid he, "the man, I am to preach upon, was nothing leſs than rich; and yet for ninety years and upwards, he has been a benefactor to his fellow-creatures. He was born, I need not ſurely tell you, of an honeſt huſbandman; and in the tendereſt ſeaſon of his youth, did he put forth his little hand, that he might guide the plough. His legs no ſooner had attained their due degree of ſtrength, but he was ſeen, from day break till the time of night fall, following his induſtrious father in the furrow. When his body was arrived to its maturity, and he had learned the buſineſs of a huſbandman, he was at all times in his field or garden, occupied in ſowing, and the like. At various

periods of his life, and not ſo much for his own benefit, as that of other people, he has cultivated upwards of two thouſand acres of a churliſh ſoil, that no one thought would ever have brought forth; but which, is fruitful now, and will continue ſo, becauſe his labour has enriched it. It was he who planted that fair ſpreading vine which every one takes notice of that paſſes through the village, and thoſe fruit trees which afford you ſo agreeable a ſhade at mid day. His untiring induſtry was not occaſioned by a principle of avarice. I have already told you he did much for others. It proceeded from a love of toil, and a deſire to benefit his neighbours. There were two great principles from which at no time he departed. One was, that mankind are born to labour, and the other that God's providence rewards their labour. He was early married, and he loved his wife and children; of which laſt, he had no leſs than twenty, all now living. Though in ſtraightened circumſtances, he was not on that account leſs happy. He took care to bring up all his little ones to induſtry and virtue, and as ſoon as they were come to years of manhood, wedded them to modeſt and induſtrious maidens. It was he, that with a countenance of ſmiles and ſatisfaction, led them to the altar. His grand-children, likewiſe, have been nurſed upon his knee; and much the greater part here preſent know there is not one among them, but affords the greateſt hopes. Upon rejoicing days

he

he was the foremoſt to make merry with his neighbours. You are all acquainted with his underſtanding and inflexible integrity. He grieved in national diſtreſſes, and was touched when individuals ſuffered. He was truly what a patriot ſhould be; for he loved his country, and was always praying Providence to bleſs it. He abhorred the wicked, and yet lived among them, juſt as if they had been virtuous. They deceived him. He was ſenſible they did; but yet he left them the diſgraceful ſatisfaction of imagining he did not ſee how they abuſed his open-hearted nature. — They again deceived him: he kept ſilence, and at no time yielded to a ſpirit of reſentment. In the practice of ſuch virtues, did he feel old age ſteal on him. He was ſenſible of its approach. His legs by this time trembled with the weight of his declining body; notwithſtanding which, each morning would he take his grandſons to the mountain, where he taught them;—drawing every leſſon from experience. His remembrance was a faithful ſervant to his judgement; and he opportunely recollected all the obſervations he had made on every ſpecies of occurrence in the courſe of his long life. He was the arbiter of all his neighbours' little differences with each other. His integrity was never called in queſtion: no; not even by the party he condemned. Upon the morning of his death, he had his numerous family all brought together; and his words were; "My dear children, I am going

to the fountain of all good. I have been conſtant in his worſhip; and I die without reluctance. Take not up much time about my burial. Let not more important labours be ſuſpended for the ſake of my remains, but lay them in the earth at evening, when the ſun is ſet, and after you have ended your day's work.

Dear auditors and children," ſaid the father, cloſing his oration, " for a moment's time commit not to the ground, let me beſeech you, thoſe white hairs that for ſo many years have been the object of your veneration; but remark the hardneſs of his hand, that honourable token of a life conſumed in labour." Upon this, the miniſter deſcending from his pulpit, held up the departed man's right hand: this hand of an enlarged dimenſion ſeemed impenetrable to the thorn, nor would the ſharpeſt flint have pierced into the fleſhy parts. He kiſſed it with reſpect, and even veneration, and the whole aſſembly did the like. This finiſhed, eight young men, ſelected from the number of his children, bore him ſlowly, and in ſilence, to the grave; and there was placed a ſpade and ploughſhare on the ſpot, as no improper trophies,

ONE

# ONE FAULT MAKES MANY.

HARRIOT and LOUISA.

LOUISA. Siſter, I ſuppoſe you will believe me now. I told you, aunt would not come home, however ſhe might promiſe us ſhe would. 'Tis now full ſix o'clock, and I am hungry. I ſhould like my tea.

HARRIOT. If aunt is not come home, you know the reaſon why. Papa has ſent her to a lady upon buſineſs for him. She is gone a great way off; but what of that? you ſee papa himſelf is in the ſhop. Would you have me go and tell him then, we want our tea?

LOUISA. No no; were you to do ſo, he would order us a bit of bread, and nothing elſe. A lucky thought! I ſaw my aunt this morning put the piece of diot bread John brought us, into the beaufet here.

HARRIOT. Yes, it may be ſo. I ſaw it there myſelf about an hour ago, and likewiſe a nice pot of currant jelly: oh, how good it looked!

LOUISA. Papa is buſy in the ſhop with cuſtomers, *(She opens the beaufet.)* I fancy we may venture, Harriot, to cut off a little of the diot bread at leaſt, provided we don't take ſo much that aunt ſhould miſs it?

HARRIOT. So we may indeed; have you a knife about you?

LOUISA,

LOUISA. Yes I have; ſo here's to go to work. *(She cuts two pieces of diot bread.)* That bit for you; and this for me. Look, ſiſter; aunt will never miſs it.

HARRIOT. No, indeed: but what a miſerable morſel you have cut me! Let me have the knife a little. I will take this corner off: it will be no great deal.

LOUISA. And me too, ſiſter: cut me off a little ſlice juſt here.

HARRIOT. Yes: but at this rate the diot bread will ſoon be gone.

LOUISA. That's true indeed: but 'tis ſo nice! ſo let me have a little more.—Oh, more than that. Ah there! fine work indeed! what ſhall we do now; you have broke it ſo?

HARRIOT. Do?—why we eat the whole, and to excuſe ourſelves,—when every thing is over, leave the door wide open, and ſay puſs has eat it up.

LOUISA. A very good come-off, indeed! that will be better than to leave this miſerable piece behind, broke all to bits. Hold Harriot. *(They ſhare the diot bread between them.)*

HARRIOT. Oh how good! What think you, ſiſter? Well, I promiſe you, as ſoon as I am grown a woman, and have money, I will breakfaſt, dine, drink tea, and ſup on diot bread.

LOUISA. And ſo will I: there, that's the laſt.

HARRIOT. And here's my laſt.——But ſiſter,

ſiſter, will you have a little of the currant jelly?

LOUISA. Why, I think I will; but let us not diſpatch the jelly, juſt as we have done the diot bread, and ſwallow all. Hold, here's a little ſpoon for you, and one for me; and now let's take in turn. Take you firſt; I will hold the pot.

HARRIOT. There, ſiſter. *(They take ſpoonful after ſpoonful, each in turn.)* Now take you: now, I: now, you: now, I: now, you: now, I.—Ah, we can ſee the bottom of the pot already.

LOUISA. But here's brother Arthur coming down. I hear him on the ſtairs. Let us hide every thing: quick! quick! and ſhut up the beaufet.—Make haſte! make haſte! *(She ſhuts the door to.)*

ARTHUR *(coming in.)* I have been long up ſtairs, becauſe I thought you would have called me when the tea was ready. But how happens this? you have not yet drunk tea?

HARRIOT. No, brother; we are waiting aunt's return. Papa has ſent her on a meſſage; but ſhe cannot now be long.

ARTHUR. No matter. I am hungry; ſo I'll look in the beaufet, if there is any thing to eat.

LOUISA. You muſt not open the beaufet. You know, papa laſt night at ſupper ſaid ſo.

ARTHUR. But I tell you, I am very hungry;

gry; and a little piece of bread, if there be any in it, will do well enough.

LOUISA *(ſtepping up before her brother.)* Oh but brother, you ſhall not come near it. Aunt will very ſoon return; ſo ſtay a moment. You obſerve we ſtay, and we are certainly as good as you.

The FATHER *(in his ſhop, and looking towards the parlour where the children are.)* What are you about there in the parlour?

ARTHUR. Nothing in the world, papa. *(He goes into the ſhop.)*

HARRIOT. Good! good! papa will put him now to work; and therefore we may finiſh at our eaſe, the currant jelly. *(She again opens the beaufet.)* It is now my turn to take.

LOUISA. No, mine.

HARRIOT. Yours, ſiſter? juſt as if you could not now remember you took laſt! *(They both hold faſt the pot and take together.)*

LOUISA. Ah ſee what have you done. 'Tis every morſel gone, you are for ever ſuch a glutton.

HARRIOT. Such a glutton? No 'tis you that ought to call yourſelf a glutton: but, to quarrel now would be ridiculous. What therefore ſhall we do? and when papa or aunt obſerves that both the diot bread and currant jelly——

LOUISA. Do you know what we muſt do? Why there lies *Tib* aſleep. Well ſiſter, we will lock her up in the beaufet, but break the empty

empty pot before we put her in; and it will then be thought, that ſhe has eat the cake and jelly, and done all the miſchief.

HARRIOT *(going towards the cat.)* A good ſcheme indeed! Here take her, ſiſter: have a care, however, ſhe don't get away.

LOUISA. Oh never fear. — There Mrs. puſs. *(She puts the cat upon a ſhelf in the beaufet.)*

HARRIOT. Now lock the door, and then.—

LOUISA. Yes, yes; and then.—Ah ah!—we are two cunning ones!

HARRIOT *(to the aunt now coming in.)* So you are come at laſt, dear aunt then: we were waiting for our tea.

The AUNT. You could not take a bit of bread, or ſomething out of the beaufet? And you too, Arthur; *(Arthur comes in.)* have not you had any thing? you knew the way to the beaufet.

ARTHUR. Yes, aunt, and I was going to it; but my ſiſters would not let me.

HARRIOT. No, becauſe papa, laſt night at ſupper, told us never to unlock the door, without permiſſion.

The AUNT. Come then, I will order tea this minute, and a plate of ſpecial bread and butter for you: but what noiſe is that? *(She hears the cat in the beaufet.)*

HARRIOT. What can it be?

ARTHUR. Well, now would I lay any wager, aunt, 'tis Tib ſhut up in the beaufet.

HARRIOT. Perhaps it may be. Oh how funny, aunt!

The AUNT *(opening the door.)* Plague take her! ſhe has frightened me.

HARRIOT *(looking in.)* And aunt, would you believe it; ſhe has broke the currant-jelly pot:——*(looking in again)* and eat the diot bread.

LOUISA. Ah what a creature! ſtay, ſtay; I will run and catch her.

The AUNT. But, young ladies, and you, Arthur, how could ſhe get into the beaufet, pray?

HARRIOT. 'Tis no fault of ours, aunt. Poſſibly, when you went out——

LOUISA. Yes, that muſt be the caſe: for you remember, what a hurry you were in. Well then, you muſt have locked the cat up without thinking what you did. She thruſts her noſe continually into every hole and corner.

The AUNT. There is ſome contrivance or another in all this; and I ſhall find it out.—Look at me ſteadfaſtly all three.

HARRIOT. Well, ſo we do: don't go and think 'tis we———

The AUNT. Don't go and think, indeed! 'Tis one of you two girls, or both, that have been practiſing your tricks. You are ſuch little gluttons!

LOUISA. I aſſure you, aunt; or rather if you will not take my word, let brother ſpeak.

THE

The AUNT. Yes yes, let brother ſpeak! He may be in the plot himſelf, for what I know: but as for you, young ladies—

HARRIOT. We?

The FATHER *(coming in.)* What ſignifies all this confuſion?

LOUISA. Nothing: only puſs has been locked up in the beaufet, and ſhe has eat the diot bread and currant jelly, and then broke the pot.

The AUNT. Yes, brother, they pretend as much: but I would lay my life 'tis they have done the miſchief, and would lay it all upon the cat. They muſt have locked her up in the beaufet. So don't deny it.

The FATHER. Is this true?

HARRIOT. We lock her up in the beaufet, aunt? No, indeed, papa, not I.

LOUISA. Nor I, papa.

The FATHER *(to Arthur.)* And you, why don't you ſpeak?

ARTHUR. Becauſe I know no more of the affair than you, papa: I was up ſtairs, and not above a quarter of an hour ago, came down to aſk if tea was ready, being very hungry.

HARRIOT. Aye, that's what I am myſelf.

LOUISA. And I too.

The AUNT. What ſad children! one can never leave them by themſelves a moment.

The FATHER. Well the miſchief is now done, and cannot be amended. For the future,

therefore, ſiſter, you muſt be more careful, when you go from home, to ſee the door locked.

The AUNT. Brother, I aſſure you I did lock it, and the cat was faſt aſleep upon this chair here, as I recollect, when I went out: yes, that I perfectly remember.

The FATHER *(aſide to the aunt.)* Do you ſay ſo, ſeriouſly? I have a thought; ſo don't you interrupt me in the execution of it.—— *(Aloud.)* Well, the miſchief, as I ſaid juſt now, is done, and cannot be amended; ſo pray, ſiſter, let the children have a bit of ſomething: they are very hungry. 'Tis too late for tea; ſo give them what they are to have for ſupper.

The AUNT. It is ready for them; a nice piece of pudding, what they left at dinner.

The FATHER. I will ring to have it up.

HARRIOT. Oh good? I like the pudding vaſtly. *(A knocking in the ſhop, the father goes out to ſee, and Betty brings the pudding up.)*

The AUNT *(after having laid the cloth.)* Come now, children; here's your ſupper. *(They ſit down.)* Look you, every one a bit; ſo eat it ſlowly, and don't ſpot your clothes.

HARRIOT and LOUISA. No, aunt.

The AUNT. Well then, begin.

HARRIOT *(to her ſiſter, while their father, who is now come in again, walks up and down behind them.)* The naſty cat! oh if I had her here, how I would beat the creature.

The

The FATHER. Come, miſs, eat inſtead of talking; being, as you ſay yourſelf, ſo very hungry.

HARRIOT and LOUISA. We do eat, papa, and very heartily.

ARTHUR *(with his mouth quite full.)* For my part, I was never in my life, I think, ſo hungry.

HARRIOT *(in a whiſper to her brother.)* Brother, you have eat all yours already: will you have my bit?

ARTHUR. Yes, yes; and thank you likewiſe. Give it me.

LOUISA. Take mine too, brother, pray; and eat it up as faſt as poſſible.

ARTHUR *(with his mouth ſtill full.)* Well, give it me.

LOUISA. Quick! quick!

ARTHUR. I can't do every thing at once.

The FATHER. Ah! ah! ſo I have found you out, young ladies, have I? you were both ſo very hungry, and yet give away your ſupper, in this manner.

HARRIOT. But, papa—

The FATHER. No talking. You accuſe the cat of having eat the diot bread and jelly, and yet give away your victuals thus. I know now what I ought to think: and you ſhall both be puniſhed, like two little gluttons as you are; and ſomething worſe—two little liars.

LOUISA. I aſſure you——

The FATHER. Stuff! cats never eat ſuch things

things as diot bread and jelly; but you did not think of that; ſo, get you gone up ſtairs into your room this moment; I will beg your aunt to follow, and reward you for your clever ſcheming as you merit.

HARRIOT. Well then, it is true indeed papa: we have been very naughty, and pretended every thing about the cat. Forgive us: we will never do the like again.

LOUISA. No, never.

The FATHER. Hold your tongues. You muſt be puniſhed. So ſet off this moment.—Siſter, I believe you underſtand me?

The AUNT. Yes yes, brother; and aſſure yourſelf I don't intend to ſpare them; for it is every day the ſame.

HARRIOT *(going out.)* Ah aunt!

LOUISA. What ſhall we do?

The FATHER. But as for you, my little fellow, let me do you juſtice. You were not a partner in their fault. I know it by your appetite. The cunning huſſeys! yet they could not lay their plot ſo cunningly as to eſcape detection. Take you, Arthur, warning from them: and be ſure if ever you commit a fault, it will be very difficult to hide it by a lie, which, on the other hand, will be a fault in aggravation of the firſt.

GENE-

# GENEROSITY.

AN Egyptian Califf, being in the field of battle, was ſurpriſed by certain rebels, who ſurrounded him; when fortunately, an Arabian happening to be near the ſpot with other ſoldiers of his party, ſeeing what was going forward, ruſhed upon the rebels and diſperſed them, at the moment they would otherwiſe have killed their enemy. The Arabian's name was *Mahn*, and he had lived for many months before, a fugitive or wandering ſort of life, becauſe he feared the Califf's vengeance, having joined a party that oppoſed him in a previous inſurrection of the people. This unlooked-for generoſity of *Mahn* was ſo uncommon, that at preſent even the Arabians introduce it in their talk. It was the means of reconciling him entirely to the Cailiff, who, by way of ſhowing with what favour he deſigned to treat him, begged a narrative of his adventures.

"Prince," replied the Arabian, "ſince your family were elevated to the empire, I have been a fugitive, and conſcious that the ſword of vengeance was at all times hanging over me, have been concealed. A friend at Baſra ſheltered me a long while in his houſe; but fearing in that city I ſhould never be as ſafe as I deſired to be, I quitted it one night, and having put on a diſ-

a diſguiſe, began my journey towards the deſert. I evaded every guard, and thought myſelf entirely out of danger, when a man, whoſe looks I thought ſuſpicious, ſeiſed my camel's bridle, aſking if I was not he the Califf was in ſearch of, and for whoſe diſcovery he had promiſed a conſiderable ſum to any one that ſhould be fortunate enough to apprehend me? I made anſwer, I was not. You are not *Mahn*? ſaid he. This diſconcerted me. I put my hand into my boſom, took a jewel out, and making him a tender of it, ſaid, Receive this petty recompence; it is a token of my gratitude for that important ſervice you will do me, as I hope, by keeping ſilence, and ſo favouring my eſcape. If ever my affairs grow better, I will ſhare my fortune with you. Gazing at my diamond, while he held it in his hand, before, ſaid he, I put it in my turban as your gift, I have a queſtion to propoſe, and I requeſt you will with truth make anſwer to it. Did you ever give away, at one time, all your wealth, for Fame reports you of a very liberal heart? No, never, was my anſwer. Did you ever give away the half? Nor that, ſaid I. The third part, then ſaid he? the fourth? and ſo on, ſinking by degrees till he had got as low as to the tenth. Pray tell me, did you ever give away the tenth of all your wealth at once? To this laſt queſtion I made anſwer, that I might have parted with the tenth. Well, interrupted he, when I had made him this reply, that

that you may know there is at leaſt one perſon in the realm more bountiful than you are, I that am no better than a private man, and get two dollars and no more per month, return your jewel, that muſt certainly be worth three thouſand times that money: ſaying this, he threw me back my gift, and diſappeared. Surpriſed at ſo heroical an action, I rode after him, and begged he would return. No, friend, ſaid I, I had much rather be diſcovered, and even loſe my head, than find myſelf thus overcome by ſuch a generous deed. Magnanimous unknown one, I will either follow you all day, or you ſhall take this tribute of my gratitude. When I had ended, he returned, and ſaid: You would then I ſhould think myſelf a robber on the public roads? I will not take your preſent, ſince I never could repay you ſo much generoſity. He was inflexible, on which we parted.

This recital ſtruck the Califf in ſo forcible a manner, that he iſſued orders to find out this generous ſoldier through the whole extent of his dominion, meaning to reward his virtues. But the ſearch was uſeleſs, and this glorious action was proclaimed in every Muſſulman and neighbouring province; notwithſtanding which, the actor never condeſcended to come forth and ſhow himſelf.

MERCY

# MERCY TEMPERS JUSTICE.

I Spent an evening very lately with a friend; and as the converſation turned upon a highway robbery that had lately been attempted, but in which the gentleman attacked had ſhot the party dead, I could not but remark it was a very awful ſituation to be in, when, for the preſervation of a little money, one ſhould take away a wretched individual's life, who might perhaps have acted from the impulſe of neceſſity: on which, a perſon in the company retorted with a ſpecies of aſperity, and aſked me whether I deſigned to be an advocate for highwaymen, or would have travellers tamely yield their money up, becauſe a villain choſe to have it; adding, he ſhould no more mind diſpatching ſuch audacious raſcals than mad dogs. I anſwered very calmly, ſaying, he ought certainly to do in ſuch a ſituation, what his conſcience dictated as proper; but to ſhow him there were ſome who did not think as he did, mentioned I would tell a little ſtory that related to the ſubject, if the company thought fit to hear me. They deſired to have this ſtory, which accordingly I told them, to the following purport.

I was two years ſince in Flanders, when a farmer of the place I happened to put up at, on my journey, was returning from the mill on horſeback with a bag of flour. A neighbour, who

who was then upon the watch for plunder, met him at the corner of a lane, and with a lifted club, and dreadful execrations, told him he muſt have his load. The former inſtantly diſmounted, ſeized the robber, flung him down, and ſtriding over him, began as follows: You are diſappointed, and your life is now at my diſpoſal. Take it then, replied the robber, or elſe give me up your flour. Yes, neighbour, I muſt have it. I am famiſhing of hunger, with my wife and children.—You are famiſhing of hunger! Ah, that alters matters, ſaid the farmer: yet I would not have you thus turn robber to procure them victuals. Take my flour: I give it you, and freely, as a preſent. Come and let me help to put it on your back. There, friend, go home, and never mention what has happened.

You may eaſily imagine what, on this occaſion, were the robber's feelings, who had acted from neceſſity, not principle. The horſe, delivered of his load, came trotting home, and ſoon was at the farm-yard gate. His maſter not appearing with him, the poor wife was frightened, and ſcreamed out. The ſervant ran that way his maſter ſhould have come, and found him walking calmly in the middle of the road. His wife inquired what accident had happened to him. Hold your tongue, replied the farmer: but the flour, my dear? ſaid ſhe. Why, don't I bid you hold your tongue? returned her huſband.

They

They were ſcarce got in, however, when he told her the affair; and added, that he could not but conſider the poor man exceedingly diſtreſſed for victuals, having had the audacity to cope with *him*, who could have done for half a dozen like him. Now can you imagine what the farmer's wife reſolved on? No one, who ſuppoſes cruelty and vengeance are inſeparable from the hearts of little men, will ever gueſs. She took a loaf, and whiſpered her good man, as follows: Since you think they are ſo hungry, they can never have the patience, ſure, to ſtay till ſuch time as their bread is made and baked. Judge what were the unhappy people's thoughts, when they beheld the farmer's wife come in. Reflect on their aſtoniſhment, when ſhe preſented them the loaf. The little children were already ſwallowing down the flour by handfuls. I ſuppreſs the reſidue of this affecting tale: the thief has ſince become an honeſt man. The farmer gives him work to do, and he brings up his children properly.

And thus a loaf, beſtowed when wanted, has reſtored a friendleſs man to honeſty. A piſtol would have torn a father from his family, and hurried him before God's judgement ſeat, to anſwer for his unrepented ſins.

THE

# THE VALUE OF A FRIEND.

CHARLES *and* PHILLIS.

A SERVANT, *(opening to two country people.)* It is hardly day light with my lady yet: wait here till ſuch time as I bring you notice you may ſee her.

CHARLES. Be ſo kind as to inform her we are two young people ſhe had formerly a friendſhip for, when living in our neighbourhood at Coventry. If ſhe ſhould aſk our names, 'tis Frampton. I am ſure ſhe will remember us.

The SERVANT. Your name is Frampton, and of Coventry. Enough. *(He goes out.)*

PHILLIS. How grand is every thing about us! Neddy will not recollect his old acquaintance. He is now become ſo rich, he muſt not be expected to remember thoſe who knew him in his ſtate of poverty.

CHARLES. He muſt be greatly changed then, ſiſter, ſince he ſhewed himſelf, and was indeed ſo good and friendly when we lived together. It is ſcarce a year ago ſince firſt he left us, and

a year is not ſufficient to corrupt ſo good a heart as he had.

PHILLIS. Love ſhould have prevented his from changing, as I fear it has. Do you remember how he left me, when his mother ſent to fetch him up from Coventry? he was entirely loſt in contemplating his good fortune, unexpected as it was, and being called the Squire. He hardly ſhed a tear at parting, got into his fine poſt chaiſe, and did not turn about to look at me, that followed him as long as I was able with my eyes, and even after he was out of ſight. He has forgot poor Phillis, and the promiſes of mutual love we made each other: I am certain he wrote down theſe promiſes. I have them in my pocket here, you know; and will return them to him: but here comes the ſervant back.

The SERVANT (*returning,*) Her ladyſhip is dreſſing, and deſires, that if you wiſh to ſee her, you would wait a little.

CHARLES. We *will* wait, ſir. Is the gentleman, her ſon, at home, pray?

The SERVANT. No: the ſquire went out betimes this morning.

CHARLES. When may we expect to ſee him?

The SERVANT. He is not yet dreſſed; ſo come again at one o'clock, and you may chance to ſpeak with him.

CHARLES. We will not fail.

PHILLIS.

PHILLIS. The ſquire, I fancy, is a fine young gentleman?

The SERVANT. Aſſuredly. He is my maſter; and, without the leaſt degree of vanity, may boaſt of being thought the ſmarteſt youth in London. All the pretty girls diſpute with one another for him, and I doubt not but ſome heireſs—

PHILLIS. You will not forget to let us know when we may ſee my lady?

The SERVANT. No, no; that you may depend on. (*He goes out.*)

CHARLES. Come, don't be diſheartened, ſiſter: you determined to come up to London with me, and be ſure yourſelf of Neddy's falſehood. We ſhall ſee him, and may judge ourſelves by his behaviour. If he has forgot you, ſiſter, your contempt for him ſhould be the happy means, I fancy, of reſtoring you to reaſon.

PHILLIS. Ah, dear brother! if you did but know how difficult it muſt be for me to deſpiſe the perſon I have loved!

CHARLES. It cannot be leſs difficult to me. My friendſhip in behalf of Neddy is as ſtrong, believe me, as your love. I do not mean to palliate his neglect. For ſix months paſt, his letters are become leſs frequent and affectionate; but he is very young. He has been all at once tranſplanted from a calm and peaceful life into the buſtle of the world. He may have poſſibly forgot himſelf a little; and to

judge of his behaviour, we muſt ſee him. Yes, the more we love him, ſtill the greater need we have of proofs before we ceaſe to love him.

PHILLIS. True, indeed, it will be always time enough to hate him.

CHARLES. I am more uneaſy, when I think upon of his mother. She is ignorant of every thing between her ſon and you; and 'tis the common talk, how inſolent the fortune ſhe has lately got has made her.

PHILLIS. But how got? Not four years ſince, when ſhe was with us, our dear father thought her ſon not good enough for me. She was not then a lady; and when either of us went to ſee her, ſhe was far from making us thus wait.

CHARLES. What would you have, dear Phillis. She has married ſince a baronet; that baronet is dead, and he has left her all his fortune.

PHILLIS. Ah! the baronet was finely ſet to work, dear brother, when he did ſo: it has been the loſs of mine.

CHARLES. But here my lady comes.

HER LADYSHIP (*coming in.*) Good morning to you both, my friends: this is a viſit I but little dreamt of: and what brings you, pray, to London?

CHARLES. I am come on buſineſs; and my ſiſter wiſhed to have a ſight of London. We ſhall ſtay, my lady, but a very little time. We could not think of going back before we ſaw

our

our old acquaintance Ned—I beg your pardon, I ſhould ſay the Squire.

HER LADYSHIP (*Aſide.*) His old acquaintance! Free indeed! (*To Charles.*) My ſon, I fancy, is gone out.

CHARLES. We have been told ſo; and are, neither of us, ſorry our firſt viſit is to you alone.

HER LADYSHIP. You compliment me; but what buſineſs, pray, can bring you ſuch a diſtance? I ſuppoſe you ſtand in need of my protection here in London. If I have it in my power to be of ſervice, I need hardly promiſe you my friendſhip. And the old man, how is he? your father?

CHARLES. We have loſt him, madam. I am now eſtabliſhed in his manufactory; and my affairs are better ſituated than to make us wait upon you, as we do, for any thing, believe me, but the pleaſure of inquiring how you do.

HER LADYSHIP. That's well for you, my friend: but what's the matter with your ſiſter? She appears to me a little dull and heavy. London does not ſuit with her.

PHILLIS. No, madam, and I hope to leave it very ſhortly.

HER LADYSHIP. You can ſcarce do better. London is a dangerous place for people of your age and inexperience. I am going to be free with you, and ſo good by, at preſent. I would wiſh to be alone a little; but when next you

come to ſee me, we will have a little converſation with each other then.

(Charles *and* Phillis *bow to her, and ſhe nods.*)

CHARLES (*aſide.*) God grant her ſon may not be like her. (*They go out.*)

HER LADYSHIP. The importance of this bumpkin is quite laughable. (*Within.*) But here comes Neddy. Well?

The SON (*entering.*) Good morrow, mother. I have juſt now bought the prettieſt gig you ever ſaw. I might have had the fineſt horſe too in the world; but after ſuch a purchaſe, I had ſcarcely more than half a dozen guineas left me, and the ſhabby fellow would not give me credit.

HER LADYSHIP. But the attorney? You forget.

The SON. I called upon him with your meſſage; and he ſays your ſuit is on the point of being finally decided, in an hour or two perhaps, as it comes on this very morning; and that every thing looks well. He bade me tell you, not to entertain the leaſt uneaſineſs on that head.

HER LADYSHIP. Good. So now let us talk of ſomething elſe.—How ſhould you like to be a colonel?

The SON. Like to be a colonel! It would make me happy.

HER LADYSHIP. Well then; you are well acquainted with Mrs. Lloyd; or, if you are not, you will be ſo very ſhortly. Mrs. Lloyd

laſt

laſt month, became a widow, and ſhe lives in Portman Square. This widow, you muſt know, you are to marry. We have ſettled every thing with one another, and ſhe promiſes to get you into the dragoons, upon the ſpot; in which, I mean to purchaſe you a company: and when you come of age, ſhe will employ her credit with the miniſter, who is her couſin, for a regiment. Theſe were our conditions, and I paſſed my word for your conſent.—But what? you ſeem a little thoughtful. What's the matter with you?

The Son. Nothing, mother. I am only thinking of your kindneſs. Every thing you do, convinces me of your affection. I ſhould, notwithſtanding, wiſh, that with reſpect to marriage, for the preſent——

Her Ladyship. But your fortune is at ſtake; for merit now a days, without protection, you will find is nothing. And beſides, my word is paſſed. Laſt week, I ordered Mr. Roſs to make your wedding clothes, which will this very morning be brought home. All this I did without your knowledge, meaning to ſurpriſe you all at once. The widow comes this day to take a dinner with us: ſo be you at home. I did not ſpeak about the lawſuit to her; being certain of ſucceſs.—So that's all ſettled; and at preſent let us talk of other matters.—A propos, I quite forgot to tell you of a viſit I have had this morning from two people

people. and who certainly intend to wait on you.

The Son. Two people wait on me! and who, pray?

Her Ladyship. Gueſs.

The Son. How would you have me gueſs? They are not, ſure, my brother officers, that will be?

Her Ladyship. No, not yet. No leſs than Frampton and his ſiſter.

The Son *(Startled.)* Frampton?

Her Ladyship. Yes; that Frampton who was uſed to come and take the advantage of your maſters to learn ſomething, when you lived at Coventry: together with his ſiſter Phillis, ſhe that you were always ſpeaking of when firſt we came to London.

The Son. And are they in town?

Her Ladyship. Yes are they. I have ſeen them: they have both been here. But wherefore ſhould this news affect you, as it does? You ſeem confuſed.

The Son. No, mother. Did they ſpeak of me?

Her Ladyship. Yes, much; and ſaid you were their old acquaintance; but I leave you. You muſt dreſs. I'll ſend the ſervant to you. Don't forget to be at home at four o'clock, or ſooner, as the widow will come early.

*(She goes out.)*

The Son *(aſide.)* Phillis Frampton here! and mean to come and ſee me! Phillis Frampton.

ton, that at one time I ſo loved, and who, on her ſide, ſtill loves me! At what a time ſhe comes! I will not ſee her. I ſhall never have the heart to ſee her. All my former love would be rekindled. I ſhould be the wretchedeſt of men. And what, too, would my mother ſay? My mother, that ſo loves me? I ſhall kill her, I believe, with grief.—No, Phillis, no, I will not ſee you. The emotion riſing in me at the mention of your name alone, convinces me I ſhould not.

The SERVANT *(coming in.)* Would you pleaſe to dreſs, ſir? I have brought your ſhoes in, and your coat and waiſtcoat. You want only them. Your hair is dreſſed already; and a little powder——

The SON. Right. *(He ſits down to have his hair powdered, and the following converſation paſſes in the interim.)* I had forgot myſelf; but William, did you ſee, this morning, the young man that came to ſee my mother, with his ſiſter?

The SERVANT. Mr. Frampton, as he called himſelf, and Mrs. do you mean?

The SON. They ſpoke to you, I fancy?

The SERVANT. Yes, ſir: Frampton aſked when he might ſee you: and I mentioned one o'clock.

The SON. You ſhould not have ſaid ſo: and now, 'tis nearly that already.

The SERVANT. Yes, ſir, within fifteen minutes.

The

The Son. If they come again, be ſure to tell them——Ah, how this unlucky viſit troubles me!

The Servant. What muſt I tell them, ſir?

The Son. It was the young man only, that aſked after me, I fancy? She ſaid nothing?

The Servant. Who, his ſiſter?

The Son. Yes.

The Servant. Oh no. She ſeemed quite ſorrowful: ſhe only aſked if you were not a fine young gentleman. I fancy ſhe is under ſome misfortunes; for ſhe turned about, as ſhe was going out, and I could ſee a tear.

The Son. Oh heaven!

The Servant. What ails you, ſir? I never ſaw you ſo much agitated.

The Son. My dear William, if you did but know how much I dread the ſight of her.

The Servant. Oh, I begin to underſtand you. This young woman is an old acquaintance, you would not be glad to know again. Well, nothing is ſo eaſy. When ſhe comes again, I will run out, and tell her you are not at home.

The Son. No, no, it would be baſe in me to hide myſelf; and therefore I will ſee and ſpeak to her. She will be ſenſible I cannot diſobey my mother. Yes, dear William, I loved Phillis Frampton: and I promiſed I would

would marry her: but Phillis is a ſimple village girl; and you may eaſily conceive my mother never would conſent—

The SERVANT. Conſent! ſhe would much rather ſee you in your coffin, than conſent to have you marry ſuch a wife.

The SON. That's true; and therefore, why ſhould I receive her when ſhe comes this morning?

The SERVANT. Why, indeed: ſo ſtay in your apartment, and let me diſpatch her.

The SON *(aſide.)* But to hide myſelf from Phillis, whom ſo often I have ſworn to cheriſh with ſincere affection?

The SERVANT. Well, reſolve, ſir: it will ſoon be one o'clock.

The SON. And Charles too, that at no time called me any thing but brother; who ſo loves me, who embraced me when I left him! ſhall I ſhun him, when he comes to ſee me?

The SERVANT. Hark! I hear a noiſe. Yes, ſir, 'tis they. I ſee them coming: ſtep into the other room.

The SON. It is too late.—What will become of me. *(He comes to meet them, without daring to look once at Phillis.)* Ah Charles, my good friend Frampton! is it you?

CHARLES. Yes Neddy: and are you too, he we came to ſee?

The SON *(looking down upon the ground.)* My heart is ſtill the ſame. Here, *(to William, who goes out.)* take theſe things away. If I ſhould

ſhould want you, I will ring. *(After a little pauſe.)* My mother quite forgot, this morning, to inquire where you put up.

CHARLES *(conſidering.)* No matter, ſince we knew your houſe, you might be certain we would call upon you.

The SON. Ah, you come too late, dear Charles.

PHILLIS *(aſide.)* Too late! Would I had never ſeen him!

CHARLES *(after another pauſe.)* Neddy, you don't recollect my ſiſter?

The SON. I am ſurely the moſt wretched of mankind. I am dependant on a mother; and my fortune is entirely in her hands. I owe her every thing, and even the ſacrifice of my felicity. Pray do not hate me.—Do not ſcorn me.—If you knew——

CHARLES. Is this, then, our reception? Let us here break off an interview ſo painful to all three. You find it difficult to recollect us; and on our ſide, we will, if we can, give over our remembering you. Farewell. *(They turn to go.)*

The SON. Stop, I beſeech you.

PHILLIS *(detaining Charles.)* Brother, he would tell you ſomething.

The SON. Have compaſſion on me, my dear Phillis. Do not overwhelm me with your ſcorn. I know I have deſerved it. Fortune has ſeduced me, I confeſs. I have been falſe alike to love and friendſhip. I have done whatever

whatever I was able to forget you. I have ſtrove to tear you from my heart. I am without excuſe: but fortune, you will own, transplanted me into another world. I yielded to the aſcendance of my mother. She did every thing ſhe could to put away from my remembrance every thought of our firſt humble ſituation, and forbade me thinking of you.

PHILLIS. But, when you were in that humble ſituation, and we better circumſtanced; remember that my father would not have me ſhow you any partiality. You know how I obeyed him.

The SON. Ah, my gentleſt Phillis, think not your dear image ever was effaced from my remembrance. When I heard your name pronounced this morning, my affection was rekindled; and your preſence now confirms it. Now while I am looking at you,—now while I am ſpeaking to you, I become again what formerly I was. My heart, even at this moment, palpitates as it was wont to do whenever you were angry with me, and I earneſtly beſought forgiveneſs.

PHILLIS. What would you allude to?

The SON. To our promiſes, dear Phillis: to our love. That love, ſo tender and ſo real, that inflamed us when as yet we were but infants. Recollect, let me beſeech you, our firſt years. Remember when we could but liſp our meanings, it was this, to love each other while we lived.

PHILLIS. And which of us, alas, has broke this promiſe?

The SON. I have: but the caſe is now reverſed; and 'twould be you that muſt be thought as having broke it, ſhould you give me up, ſince I proteſt, that notwithſtanding what has happened, and the ambitious proſpects of a mother, I will love you for the future more than ever. Would you do ſo? Would you have the heart to ſay as follows: Neddy, (as you uſed to call me) I will love you now no longer.

PHILLIS. Never, never, will I ſay ſo.

The SON *(to Charles.)* She relents, I think. Plead with her, Charles, for my forgiveneſs. (*He throws himſelf into the arms of Charles.*)

CHARLES. Siſter, you don't ſee: he has embraced me juſt this moment, as he uſed to do.

The SON. My lovely Phillis, I am not yet totally unworthy of you. No, I find I am not, by the tranſports of my heart. The gift of loving is a preſent Heaven grants only once. I have ſo frequently lamented having loſt thoſe tranquil days we uſed to paſs together, and been taught from dear experience, that man's happineſs is placed in love alone, and in retirement.

CHARLES. Deareſt friend, it ſtill depends upon yourſelf alone, or I am much miſtaken, to enjoy this happineſs. Go back to Coventry with

with us. You will diſcover there unhappy objects in abundance, upon whom you may employ ſome little portion of the fortune you are come to. You will be employed in doing good, and we ſhall then eſteem you ſtill the more on that account; and thus, you will enjoy the happineſs of both the wealthy and the poor at once.

The Son. Ah, would to heaven my mother heard you with the ſame emotion as myſelf. But, as I ſaid, ſhe is made up of nothing but ambition; and with all her money, is unhappy. She will never think of what ſhe has herſelf, but ſees what others have. I promiſe you, however, I will thwart her in the meaſures ſhe has planned; and, as ſhe ſays too, for my happineſs. I have a right to do ſo. I will let her ſee that written promiſe I once gave you, as you recollect, of marriage: you have certainly preſerved it, Phillis.

Phillis. I have kept it, I acknowledge: but for ſome time paſt, not dar'd to read it. Every time I thought to do ſo, it ſaid ſomething or another, or at leaſt I thought as much, againſt you.

The Son. My dear brother, and my charming Phillis, hear me ſwear by every thing I love, how truly I will keep my word. I will this moment fling myſelf a ſuppliant at my mother's feet, and tell her I ſhould die if Phillis ſhould not be my wife. If ſhe conſents, 'tis well. If not, I am reſolved to ſhow her I will

have a will, at preſent, of my own. And ſhould ſhe——

HER LADYSHIP *(coming in.)* Neddy, they have brought you home your wedding clothes.

PHILLIS. Oh heavens!

The SON. Don't think——

PHILLIS. You have deceived me.

The SON. Heaven can witneſs——

HER LADYSHIP. What's the matter with you, and what ſignifies ſo many ſecrets. 'Tis not uſual to pay viſits thus before a wedding. So, pray Mr. Frampton, and you, Phillis, that are come to teaze us, go about your buſineſs; we have now no time to waſte on you.

CHARLES. Yes, Madam; we will go about our buſineſs, that you may be ſure of. Come then, ſiſter, with your brother, and let him be every thing now left you.

The SON *(running after them.)* No, pray ſtay, let me beſeech you.

CHARLES. No: you would have too much then to bluſh at. *(They go out.)*

The SON. Mother, I reſpect you; but you pierce my heart. And I muſt aſk you, by what right you take upon you, as you do, to ſcorn my friends and equals? and not only that, but yours too? They were born to equal expectations with ourſelves; and have much better hearts. Yes, better.

HER LADYSHIP. Is it you, ſir, that ſpeak thus? What, you? And do you dare——

The SON. Yes, truly, I dare tell you that your

your riches are even nothing to me. I abhor them, if, on that pretext, you would deprive me of the right I have to chuſe with whom I will be happy.

HER LADYSHIP. Enough. I underſtand you, and the myſtery I was afraid of is at length diſcovered. You were meant for that low ſituation out of which my love, and your good fortune, would have drawn you. You love Phillis, I am certain: you are not aſhamed of that; you are aſhamed to tell meſo.

The SON. No, mother. I am not aſhamed. I tell you, therefore, I *do* love her; and even glory in it. My affection for her is of ſcarce leſs ſtanding in my heart, than that I have for you. It was in vain, I ſought to put it out.—Thank heaven, the little virtue and good ſenſe I had, have got the better of my pride and folly. I have promiſed I would marry Phillis, and will keep my word. My happineſs depends upon it. I prefer her, ſimple as ſhe is, to all your widows, who have nothing but relationſhip to make their boaſt of.

HER LADYSHIP. Why, where are we? I ſhould like to know. You marry Phillis? You?

The SON. Yes, I; and ſince you force me to infringe the duty I would gladly ſhow you, let me beg you would not meddle with the buſineſs of my love. Since I have been your ſon, you know my heart yet never thought as yours does.

HER

HER LADYSHIP. Oh, this is too much! too much! Ungrateful and unnatural as you are! Is this the recompence of every thing I have done for you? I have only lived for your ſake. I have ſacrificed all my enjoyments to you, and when now your fortune was about to pay me for it, you would thus diſgrace me, and thus ſlight the promiſe I had given the widow, in your name.

The SON. But, mother, ought I to deceive her? ought I to hold out the offer of my heart, when I have given it to another? ſhe will ſoon be here, and ſhall be judge herſelf. I will inform her of my love for Phillis.

The SERVANT *(coming in.)* Mr. Parchment, the attorney, waits upon your ladyſhip: his buſineſs, he directed me to tell you, is of great importance: and he begs to ſee you inſtantly.

HER LADYSHIP. Of great importance! Surely he has no bad news. Pray heaven, my lawſuit have not gone againſt me. Cruel child! I have a thouſand things to ſay, but muſt defer them. *(She goes out.)*

The SON. William.

The SERVANT. I deſigned to ſtay, that I might aſk you, ſir, if what the people ſay, is true.

The SON. What do they ſay, then?

The SERVANT. That her ladyſhip has loſt her lawſuit. I was juſt now at next door, and heard a perſon ſay, he came from Weſtminſter,

ſter, where every body then was talking of it: and, for my part, I ſuſpect the attorney's buſineſs is about it. All the people ſay, her ladyſhip is ruined. Is it true, ſir?

The Son. It may be ſo, leave me.

The Servant. *(aſide.)* Yes, yes; that is what I mean to do.—But, ſir,—

The Son. Well. What?

The Servant. My fellow-ſervants have all heard it: and the tutor, too, is grumbling; he has loſt his time, he ſays, in ſuch a houſe as this is, ſo you will not be offended, if I come to aſk you whether you deſign to keep a ſervant any longer. If you do not, I have notice of a family that want one; ſo, if you would only turn me out of doors, when you have paid me, I ſhall be obliged to you.

The Son. Yes, William, I will ſee you paid at night; and you may go wherever you think fit.

The Servant. Oh, I am not at all uneaſy, ſir, about my money; but——

The Son. But, you are ſtill our ſervant: ſo, begone, ſir, for the preſent, and don't let me tell you ſo a ſecond time.

The Servant *(going out.)* He muſt have money ſtill, I fancy, or he would not ſpeak ſo.

The Son *(alone.)* This reverſe of fortune might have been expected. That the tutor ſhould behave thus, ſhocks me; he that has ſo often told my mother he had all the affection

of

of a father for me. For myſelf, I care not much, and were it not for my poor mother—but I ſee her coming. *(To her Ladyſhip, who comes in.)* Were I not acquainted with your news, dear mother, I could read it in your face: but, courage; one good thing is, that you could not but ſuppoſe your lawſuit might turn out a loſing game.

HER LADYSHIP. Ah, Son!

The SON. The tutor, doubtleſs, has been with you. Yet, his baſeneſs ought not to incenſe, but comfort you. Since he was here a mean dependant only on your riches, it is he, with others of his hollow-hearted nature, ſuch as you will find, no doubt, in plenty, upon this occaſion, that have been the greateſt loſer by the failure of your lawſuit; let us not neglect, however, any of the means ſtill left us. You have friends.

HER LADYSHIP. Yes, Neddy; happily for us, the widow. In my agitation, I made ſhift to ſcrawl a letter to her, with the news of our misfortune; but, informing her it was not irreparable, if in addition to the honour ſhe deſigned my family, ſhe would but grant me the ſupport of her affinity. I thought it better to acquaint her of my ſituation by theſe means, than wait till ſhe ſhould come to dinner. She will certainly be here the ſooner for it; ſo, my deareſt Neddy, I beſeech you——

The SON. Yes, I know what you would have me do: pretend a paſſion for her, though I have

I have it not; but you will ſee——Bad news, however, will come ſoon enough; and therefore I ſuppreſs what I deſigned to ſay: but, when I mentioned you had friends, I thought of Rivers principally: he, I muſt acknowledge, has ſeemed always grateful for the poſt to which your intereſt advanced him.

HER LADYSHIP. Yes, I recollect with pleaſure now, I was ſo happy as to do him ſuch a ſervice; and will now make trial of his friendſhip. I ſhall not be abſent more than twenty minutes, or perhaps a quarter of an hour; before which time, the lady will not come: but ſhould ſhe, recollect, dear ſon, your mother's expectations. Every thing depends on the reception you afford her. *(She goes out.)*

The SON. It is now in Frampton's power to do me ſervice; but then, Phillis, who believes, and juſtly, I deceived her, and who went away without once condeſcending to hear any thing I had to ſay, when once my mother ſpoke about my wedding clothes—would ſhe not think it was the fear of indigence that wrought upon me, ſhould I venture to appear before her. Wretched as I am! I ſhould not dare even ſay I love her, after what has paſſed.——But, heavens! who's this? 'tis Frampton. What can bring him back? How ſhall I even look him in the face?

CHARLES *(entering with a paper in his hand.)* You did not think of ſeeing me again; but this

is the laſt time I ſhall intrude upon you. I deſign not to diſturb you in preparing for your wedding. All I wiſhed was, to return you back this promiſe, which my ſiſter was ſo weak as to accept of at your hands. So, now you are completely free, and will be happy: or at leaſt, I have ſtill love enough remaining in my heart, to wiſh you may be ſo.

The Son. What language!

Charles. Do you bluſh to take the paper back? You did not bluſh, however, when aſſuming an appearance of the greateſt love and candour; here where we are now, you aſked our pardon for your paſt behaviour. You durſt talk of love and marriage to my ſiſter, after you had made agreement to eſpouſe another woman. Go; the man that could be capable of ſuch a villainous proceeding, ought to make his boaſt that he need bluſh at nothing. So, be bold, and look not down upon the ground thus. It is I that ought to bluſh.

The Son *(after a pauſe.)* Yes, Frampton, you are in the right. I *was* ſo baſe as to conceal a marriage from you, though I never meant it ſhould be ſolemnized. 'Tis juſt, however, I ſhould ſuffer as I do, for my duplicity. I take this promiſe. It is now the only good thing left me: but unworthy as I am of being truſted on the ſtrength thereof, I tear it. Go then, and abandon an unhappy youth, who merits only your contempt. However, if you knew how

how greatly every one except your ſiſter and yourſelf, ſhould pity me, perhaps——

CHARLES. Should pity you? What, pity you, when every thing ſucceeds as you would wiſh? You are about to marry, we are told, ſo rich a woman, by whoſe credit you will riſe to honour: you enjoy a princely fortune; and your mother idolizes you. Unleſs the recollection of a friend and miſtreſs, both of whom you have deceived, will interrupt you in your pleaſures, nothing will: but be of comfort: you ſhall never, for the future, hear us mentioned. We will patiently withdraw; and in the claſs of people you aſpire to mix with, you will find it very eaſy to forget a woman you have made unhappy.

The SON. 'Tis too much. Reſpect a little my misfortune, and——

PHILLIS *(running in.)* Ah, brother, they have loſt their all. You could not know it; and I come leſt what you ſay ſhould be conſidered as an inſult to them in their fallen ſituation.

CHARLES. How? Explain your meaning, ſiſter.

PHILLIS. Their misfortune was made public. By the failure of a lawſuit, they have loſt their whole eſtate, and are reduced to beggary.

The SON. To beggary, indeed; and yet, what I have loſt, afflicts me very little, I can ſay with truth. My greateſt cauſe of ſorrow, what

what moſt touches me, is this; that you ſuppoſe me guilty: and, alas, believe me, I have too much intereſt in appearing innocent to you, that I ſhould not do all I can to juſtify myſelf.

PHILLIS. To juſtify yourſelf! Believe me, you need never take that trouble. 'Tis but once *they* are deceived, who do not merit ſuch hard fate. But you are now unhappy, and I come that I may get my brother to relieve you. Yes, dear brother, he has only injured me: he has been falſe to love; and friendſhip ſhould not know it. You would be more criminal than he, ſhould you abandon him; for, after his ill uſage, I had ſtill my brother left me; but, ſhould you deſert him, what would he have left him? His abode is now become a deſert, and his very ſervants are prepared to leave him. In this ſituaton, brother, you ſhall be his ſuccour; and my heart ſhall pay you for the kindneſs done at my requeſt, by adding to that love I have for you, all the affection I had once for him.

The SON. Phillis, you diſtract my heart. I never in my life deceived you; for when firſt this ſecret marriage was propoſed, I did not like it in the leaſt: but when I ſaw you, I reſolved to ſhun it. If I hid it from you, I deſigned by ſuch a ſtep to make myſelf appear leſs guilty, and not grieve you.

PHILLIS. Had you ever loved, you would have known, as I do, that however any news may

may prove unwelcome, it is not ſo grievous as the ſlighteſt breach of confidence in thoſe we truſt to.

The Son. Well then, Phillis, I ſubmit my lot to your deciſion. I am moſt unhappy. I am left by all the world, and have no other ſpecies of reſource than you. In ſuch a ſituation, give me back your heart: but if you cannot love me, you have then no right or title to befriend me. I will owe you nothing.

Phillis. What, you mean then——

The Son. I will die; or, on the other hand, be happy in your love: this diſpoſition is not novel to me.

Phillis *(after a pauſe.)* Brother, ſhould we leave him in his adverſe fortune, no one will afford him ſuccour.

The Son. No compaſſion, Phillis; nothing can be more inſulting after love. You muſt entirely hate me, or forgive as you were uſed to do.

Phillis *(looking at him.)*. How gracefully misfortunes ſit upon you. You reſemble much more now, that Neddy I ſo loved.

Charles. Believe me, I was never otherwiſe. My heart aſſures you ſo. It is your own: that witneſs cannot lie.

Phillis. If I were ſure.

Her Ladyship *(coming in.)* My dear, dear ſon, all hope is vaniſhed. I am come from Rivers, who refuſed to ſee me; and this

letter, in my abſence, has been left below. There, read it. At a glance I could diſcern the meaning, but have not conſidered the particular expreſſions. Read it, I can now attend.

The Son *(reading.)*—

" To Lady Upſtart.

Madam,

I had heard of your misfortune juſt before your letter came. You cannot doubt of my deſire to ſerve you, if I could; but, at my time of life, I ſhould be cenſured if I went about ſoliciting in favour of your ſon. I will not ſay I think it ſingular, that you concealed the knowledge of this lawſuit from me; but in anſwer to your wiſh of ſeeing me, I judge that in your preſent ſituation, you will like it better to be left alone, and therefore ſhall not come.

I am, my Lady,
Your moſt humble ſervant,
———————."

Her Ladyship. And is this then ſhe, who yeſterday ſwore to me, ſhe would give up every thing, much rather than not be my daughter? —I have not a ſingle friend then left me.

Charles. Ah, my Lady! why do you forget thus you have me?—My ſiſter and myſelf, this morning, were unhappier by a deal than you; for you have only loſt your fortune, but we feared we had for ever loſt our friends.

It

It will be yours to ſhow us our injuſtice, by accepting every thing we have.

The Son. I was quite ſure it would be ſo. Yes, mother, Frampton is your friend and benefactor. 'Tis to him my heart confides. As for me, it is impoſſible I can partake the happineſs his friendſhip promiſes you.

Her Ladyship. What, then, would you leave me?

The Son (*Shewing Phillis.*) She no longer loves me: ſhe ſuppoſes I deceived her.

Her Ladyship. Do you think ſo, Phillis, when for your ſake only, he durſt diſobey me?

Phillis. Do not finiſh, madam: it is he, your ſon, that I would rather wiſh to credit. Yes, yes, I am certain of your heart. I will not think of ſaying I return you mine; for I could never take it from you. Phillis is to day much happier than yourſelf: ſince it is Phillis that will make you happy.

The Son (*falling at the feet of Phillis; and then coming to Charles.*) And will you, too, be my brother?

Charles (*embracing him.*) It is now a long time you have had that title in my heart. (*To the Lady.*) We were intended, Madam, to compoſe one ſingle family. Permit your ſon, then, to eſpouſe my ſiſter, and whatever I call mine, ſhall be her portion.

Her Ladyship. Ah, good Frampton!

what effectual vengeance! and how much, too, are you not above me.

CHARLES. You miſtake the matter, my good Lady, ſince 'tis you that are unhappy; and the unhappy always have a claim on our reſpect.

The SON. Well, mother, ſay you give me, as I hope you will, to Phillis.

HER LADYSHIP. Ah, my children! I would give myſelf to you. But how ſhall I atone——

PHILLIS. My deareſt mother! if you knew how much I think I owe you for the joy I feel in giving you that tender title!

CHARLES. I have wherewithal about me, to content your creditors. We will beſtow upon your mother, my dear Neddy, your eſtate at Coventry. The portion of your wife ſhall be improved by me, if you approve it, in my manufactory: and you ſhall have a ſhare therein. *(To the Lady.)* Do you approve of theſe arrangements, Madam?

HER LADYSHIP. Yes, entirely; and confeſs I owe you much more than you think I do; for you have taught me, that the happineſs of life is not in vanity; but, on the other hand, that virtue only is our ſuccour in misfortune.

THE

# LAWSUIT.

A WORTHY husbandman had left two ſons behind him; one named Stephen, and the other Nicolas. Upon his death bed, he had made them joint poſſeſſors of a farm, ſufficient to ſupport them, in a creditable way. There was ſo little wanted, it appears, to make them happy in the world. Why, therefore, did they not keep up that friendly underſtanding nature meant ſhould be in common to all brothers, ſince ſhe formed them of one fleſh and blood?

A part of this ſame farm bequeathed them, was a very fruitful and well cultivated orchard. In the father's life time, he had been induſtrious to enrich it with the fineſt fruit trees. As they yielded every year prodigiouſly; and then too, as their produce always found its price at market, owing to the former reputation they had gained, each brother thought the garden ought to be his own, and neither would reſign it to the other.

From this mutual obſtinacy, they contracted a degree of hatred to each other. Neither did they ſpeak, at laſt, without injurious language. Fie upon you Nicolas, would Stephen ſay, you muſt be, certainly, a very wicked man, and have

have no right to ſuch a charming farm: while Nicolas, on his ſide, fretting at the inſult, would reply as follows: Wicked; look at home, good Mr. Stephen; in our father's life-time, did not your frequenting every alehouſe give him great uneaſineſs? What would become of all theſe trees, if you were left to manage them? In leſs than half a dozen years, they would have leaves and nothing elſe upon them.

Their unhappy quarrel was reported to the curate of the village, who conſidered it his duty, as a miniſter, to reconcile them, if he could: he called that very day to ſee the brothers; aſked them why they liv'd no longer upon friendly terms, as formerly, together. Muſt your orchard, ſaid the worthy man, inſtead of joining, ſeparate you?—Be united for the future; and, as prudent partners, if not loving brothers, do whatever you are able to increaſe the profits of it.

No, ſaid Stephen, I will have no union in this matter: the whole orchard ſhall be mine: and mine too, added Nicolas: I am reſolved to have it all myſelf.

Well then, replied the curate, one, as I imagine, muſt be leſs expert in farming matters than the other: let him, therefore, yield the orchard to his brother; and receive the value of it out of what the farm produces yearly. You may ſettle with each other after every harveſt is got in.

Agreed,

Agreed, cried both at once, to this propoſal: let my brother give it up. I have the greateſt right, ſaid Stephen, to the orchard, being, as I am, the elder; and, of courſe, more ſkilled in huſbandry. And, why ſo, Mr. *Skilled in huſbandry*, ſaid Nicolas? Oh, you ſhall give the orchard up to me; for I have got it in my head to make you. You need only take it out, ſaid the elder. No, returned the younger, I will ſooner let you have the air we breathe in.

You are very obſtinate young men; I ſee that plainly, ſaid the curate, and will never of yourſelves adjuſt the matter. Will you then draw lots, to ſettle which of you the orchard ſhall belong to?

No, ſaid Stephen, I will have no lots: nor I, ſaid Nicolas.

On this, the curate, as the laſt expedient counſelled them to ſell the orchard, and divide the value of it; but this propoſition was rejected by both parties, like the former.

Nothing, ſaid the worthy paſter, will compoſe the affair between you: nothing but a lawſuit. If you go to law with one another, you will quickly find what ruination, hatred muſt infallibly produce between two brothers, who were formed by nature, on the other hand, to love and cheriſh one another.

They regarded not this prophecy; but each of them repaired that moment to a lawyer, ſuch as they reſpectively ſuppoſed had moſt expedients in his head, to make their claim ſucceſsful.

Thus,

Thus, then, was a lawſuit inſtituted, whoſe deciſion no one would have thought required much time; but which, chicanery protracted two whole years. If one appraiſed the orchard, an appraiſement of it by the other, would be ſure to follow. Every term, they had to make ſome motion in the courts, and new reports were given in of courſe. The cultivation of the property, as any one may eaſily imagine, in the interval, was wholly laid aſide. If one deſigned to plant an apple tree, the other was reſolved to have a pear tree in its ſtead. In conſequence of this diſſenſion, there was ſcarce a tree that yielded half its former value; and the little money it afforded, far from ſtaying in the purſe of either brother, was laid hold of by his lawyer.

They had each of them a worthy wife, and many children, of a diſpoſition (had their ſouls been leſs at variance with each other) of a diſpoſition, I repeat, to make them happy.

The unhappy women frequently would give their huſbands council, to the following purport: Deareſt huſbands, why do you continue perſecuting thus each other? We have every thing our hearts can wiſh for. You are well in health, as we are, and our children are diſpoſed to love us heartily. Our fields are very fruitful, and you know we may be rich, if we think proper, by our induſtry. Why, therefore, will you not be happy? In reply to ſuch

ſuch ſound admonitions, each would anſwer; how can I by any means be happy having ſuch a brother, whoſe bad temper will go near to kill me.

When at night their work was over, and they ſaw their children running out of doors to meet and kiſs them, they would check the little creatures' wiſhes, and cry out: What now? Get back again. I cannot play with you at preſent. I am too much in a paſſion. And whenever the poor infants ſought to ſhow their love by innocent careſſes, as by jumping on their knees, and ſo forth, they would ſay: Have done, and ſometimes even beat them.

Nothing pleaſed them when at table: every thing went wrong, becauſe their hearts were full of bitterneſs: and all night long, it was impoſſible for either of them to ſleep many hours ſucceſſively, becauſe his head was everlaſtingly deviſing ſchemes to hurt the other.

You ſuppoſe, perhaps, I have by this time ſaid the worſt I can of theſe two brothers. No indeed: they ſeemed determined to diſcover which could tell the vileſt ſtories of the other. Nicolas was frequently with other peaſants at the alehouſe, and would always be endeavouring to perſuade them what a villain Stephen was, who only meant, as he aſſerted, firſt to ruin *him* that he might after go to law with every perſon in the village; and as Stephen, was on his ſide, always ſaying ſomething or another bad againſt his brother, people were at laſt

laſt diſpoſed in earneſt to believe them both. They were avoided like two plagues by all their neighbours; and there was not one but would have gladly ſent them, as the ſaying is, to *Mocho*, that the village might be rid of two ſuch fellows.

After, as already I have mentioned, two whole years conſumed in quarrelling and trouble, it was ſolemnly awarded by the Judges that this orchard ſhould be ſold by auction, and that what it went for ſhould be kept to pay the lawyers.

Think, if you are able, what was the confuſion of our plaintiff and defendant, when they heard this ſentence: they ſtood looking at each other without bringing out a word expreſſive of their diſappointment.

Ah, dear brother, in the end, ſaid Nicholas, we have deſerved this uſage. We might eaſily have ſhunned our preſent ſituation, and poſſeſſed our orchard ſtill. Inſtead of the vexation we have cauſed each other, we might eaſily have made our wives and children happy, and retained the eſteem and friendſhip of our neighbours.

Yes, indeed, ſaid Stephen, this is what our wickedneſs has coſt us. Ah, if we had every thing to do again!

At leaſt then, for the future, let us both be wiſer, anſwered Nicolas. Shake hands. I will no longer hate you.

Nor

Nor I you, ſaid Stephen, and embraced him: they ſhed tears, and all their animoſity now vaniſhed.

In a very little time they found the benefit of living upon friendly terms; but then, the conſequences of their quarrel, for a long time, followed them. Their orchard flouriſhed in the hands of ſtrangers, while the farm they ſtill retained, with all their labour, came again but ſlowly to its firſt condition; ſo much had the cultivation of it been neglected, while the lawſuit was with vigour carried on. Their fellow-townſmen's jokes and ſneers purſued them with light feet; while, on the other hand, their confidence and friendſhip hung a long time back before it overtook them. The rapacious lawyers had exhauſted both their purſes: care and trouble influenced their health. They found no longer in their children half that gaiety which is peculiar to the infant ſtate of life; nor could their wives ſo ſoon be brought again to love them, after they had done ſo much to hurt that family they were in duty bound to cheriſh.

THE

# NECESSITY

OF

# VIRTUOUS PRINCIPLES.

IN the earlieſt period of this preſent century, a certain Lady Sheldon, married to Sir Philip Sheldon, had been ſo unhappy as to ſee her huſband's fortune ſwallowed up in that unbounded love he entertained for every pleaſure of the field and table, added to her own too blameable compliance with his diſſipation.

Born of a too eaſy temper, which had brought her thus to ruin, ſhe diſcerned not the profundity of that abyſs to which ſhe had been poſting, till ſhe ſaw her ſon return from Oxford, whither he had been for ſtudy. It was then his preſence all at once reanimated, or to ſpeak with more propriety, firſt kindled in that boſom a maternal feeling ſhe had never yet experienced.

Of an amiable figure, of an upright heart, and cultivated underſtanding, did young Sheldon, when he poured out tears of tenderneſs into the boſom of his mother, whom he had not ſeen

ſeen for upwards of ten years, or longer, penetrate her with the ſharpeſt ſenſe of ſorrow and repentance, when ſhe ſaw how little ſervice he could hope to reap from the affection of Sir Philip, or her own.

The conſequences of exceſs had heightened very much the baronet's hereditary gout, who every day beſides increaſed the general imbecility with which his conſtitution now ſeemed menaced, by the immoderate uſe of ſtrong and ſtupifying liquors.

It was no long time before young Sheldon ſaw into the great diſorder of his father's circumſtances, and conceived the project of adventuring out to India, ſo that he might have, at one time or another, a ſufficiency to keep his mother, whom he valued and reſpected as a ſon ſhould do; for now Sir Philip's end was drawing on apace, and he could never hope his father would be living after time had been allowed for going and returning with a fortune, even had no intervening time been needful to acquire that fortune.

He communicated this intention to his mother, which afflicted her exceedingly. She had been able to deprive herſelf of an enjoyment, while ſhe did not know its value; but no ſooner had ſhe ſeen her ſon, and grown acquainted with his merit, than ſhe thought ſhe never could conſent to loſe him: and, in fact, ſhe ſtarted ſuch a number of impediments to this adventure, that young Sheldon did not quit the kingdom.

Things were in this ſituation, when a kinſman of Sir Philip's died, who had no children, and bequeathed young Sheldon a conſiderable legacy. His will however was conteſted; a diſpute at law was unavoidable, and frequent conſultations neceſſary, but the elder Sheldon could not quit his houſe.

My lady only, or young Sheldon, could come up to London, and inſtruct the lawyers in the merits of their caſe; becauſe the one or t'other was obliged to be at all times with the gouty baronet, whoſe illneſs was of ſuch a nature, that he could not poſſibly be left alone. If Sheldon had been charged with this commiſſion in the Capital, his morals were expoſed to danger in a place that paſſed, in Lady Sheldon's motherly imagination, for the ſink of all corruption. And this motive cauſed her to procure the neceſſary papers from Sir Philip, for conducting the affair herſelf. She found, beſides, the greateſt ſatisfaction in performing every thing ſhe could, in favour of a ſon, whoſe intereſt hitherto ſhe had too long neglected.

Having got theſe papers, ſhe then ſettled every thing reſpecting the attention neceſſary to be paid Sir Philip, and ſet out for London, leaving in her place the young and duteous Sheldon with a father, whoſe condition he eſſayed, by every filial duty in his power to comfort, never quitting his bed ſide, but waiting on him, day and night, continually.

Being come to London, in the time of that too famous

famous Collins, who is ſtill the ſubject of diſcourſe among a certain ſet of men, his company, my lady happened to fall into; and without foreſeeing what might be the unhappy conſequences, ſhe commenced an intimate acquaintance with him. His celebrity or reputation as a writer, dangerous to the morals of mankind ſo far from being any obſtacle to great connections he might form from day to day, augmented them; and that, not only with the common claſs of people, and the gentry likewiſe, but at court too, with the Great. My Lady Sheldon, who at firſt was only anxious to get friends, imagined ſhe could not promote her intereſt more than by this intimacy with a juſtice of the peace, which was an honour Collins had attained to.

In reality, he did ſupport her with the greateſt warmth againſt her adverſaries, in the diſputation which, unhappily for them, they had preſumed to inſtitute againſt the right Sir Philip's kinſman had to give his property as he thought fit: but as from neighbourhood, they were particularly intimate with one another, the connection ſoon grew fatal to her ladyſhip, who, under ſuch a maſter, ſucked in all the poiſon of that unbelief her friend inculcated, not only in his writings and at home, but in his converſation with the world at large.

Aſtoniſhed at the novel things which he was every day advancing, and that ſtruck her weak imagination, ſhe profeſſed herſelf his docile pu-

pil, and improved ſo faſt, in that convenient ſcience of the world called DOUBT, that ſhe became, and in a very little time, the object of her maſter's veneration, and was flattered by the Tindals of the age, the Tolands, and like ſort of people, introduced by Collins to my lady, as his aid de camps, in every fight he was continually waging againſt TRUTH.

The lawſuit was not in the interim, however, any way neglected. It went on as well as ſhe could wiſh, when, by a letter from her ſon, ſhe was informed Sir Philip was no longer: he had died, as ſaid the letter, of his gout, which rather unexpectedly had got into his ſtomach, but departed in the hope and expectation of a Chriſtian pardoned by God's mercy. This laſt circumſtance, thus mentioned in the young man's letter, made my lady give a pitying ſhrug when ſhe came to it; and the ſtrength infuſed into her mind by Collins and his fellow labourers, enabled her to bear with bravery, like a heroine, that news, which ſome few months before, if it had happened, would have made her like a coward, ſhed ſome tears.

Her firſt proceeding was to ſend for Sheldon up to London. Her deſign was, as ſhe mentioned, to extend the knowledge ſhe had gained herſelf, enable him to conquer little prejudices that the Univerſity and country might have planted in his mind, and introduce him as another ſcholar to her worthy maſters.

Sheldon (now himſelf Sir Philip) ſoon arrived;

rived; but what his aſtoniſhment and ſorrow, when he ſaw his mother changed into a catechiſt of INCREDULITY. Whatever benefit her reſidence in London had procured him, in the proſpect of a favourable iſſue to the lawſuit, could not, in his notion, make amends, in any manner, for his mother's loſs of her firſt Chriſtian principles, the only ones that can contribute even to the happineſs of human beings in this ſtate of life.

He diſſembled every thing however, and heard patiently the Tolands, Collinſes, and Tindals, without giving any hope he ſhould become their proſelyte indeed, but yet, without diſcovering to them any of that inward horror raiſed within him, by the daringneſs of her reflections upon objects, never to be thought upon but with the deepeſt veneration.

Lady Sheldon wondered, and was ſometimes out of patience, at his little progreſs in that ſcience, which is only the abuſe of true philoſophy, but which our Deiſts honour with the name of TRUTH; and he, on his ſide, full, no doubt, of an idea which the ſequel of this hiſtory will ſhow him putting into execution, ſeemed at length to yield, and be no leſs ambitious than his mother of the praiſes of our famed triumvirate.

The lawſuit came ſoon after to a hearing, and was gained by Sheldon, who ſet out on his return from London to the country houſe, where he expected ſoon to ſee his mother. She,

on her part, loſt no time in coming down, as ſoon as every thing was ſettled, eager as ſhe was to meet a ſon ſhe doated on, and who was now her ſole dependance, ſince the fortune of her houſe was totally concentered in his perſon.

The affection of this ſon was an affair of ſo much certainty to Lady Sheldon, that ſhe had not the leaſt doubt within her of a hearty welcome, but ſuppoſed herſelf the happieſt of all mothers.

She had previouſly informed Sir Philip of the day and hour he might expect her. She was punctual to the time, but not ſurpriſed a little when arriving at the dwelling, not a ſingle ſoul appeared. She was unable to ſuppreſs her wonder; and by this time having entered and ſeen no one, What can all this ſignify? ſaid ſhe. Is Sheldon dead or abſent?

She was got by this time into an apartment where ſhe ſaw her ſon, Sir Philip, lying on a ſopha, in an attitude of perfect negligence, and reading. He got up, came forward, and ſaluted her, but not with any ardour of affection, and much leſs with that effuſion of a heart that loves. My dear, dear Sheldon, ſaid her ladyſhip, what means this forced reception you afford me?—What, replied Sir Philip, have you to complain of, mother? I am glad, yes, very glad to ſee you. As I take it you are tired, ſo come, and I will ſhow you to the room we mean to give you.

Mean to give me? ſaid the mother. Am I

not

not at home ?—Yes, yes, replied Sir Philip, ſo you are indeed; but we have made ſome change here, my good mother, ſince you left us, which I hope you will not take amiſs; but chearfully put up with ſuch accommodations as you find provided for you, though they ſhould not be ſo great as you expected.

Having ſaid thus much, he took his mother by the hand, and led her to the fartheſt chamber of the houſe, which he deſigned her, and which chamber was extremely dark and inconvenient. Inſtantly the ſervants entered with her trunks, and hardly was ſhe in, herſelf, than Sheldon made her a low bow, and quitted the apartment, leſt, as he expreſſed it, ſhe might want to reſt herſelf.

My lady was ſo utterly aſtoniſhed at this unexpected ſort of introduction, that ſhe threw herſelf into a chair, incapable of ſpeaking, or deſiring Sheldon would come back, and mention why he left her in this manner. Supper time ſoon came. A ſervant was diſpatched up ſtairs to aſk her ladyſhip, if ſhe intended to come down. Her ladyſhip, incenſed at ſuch a meſſage, puſhed the ſervant out, and locked the door. The meſſage was not afterwards repeated; and ſhe paſſed the night not only without ſleep, but in the greateſt agitation.

On the morrow Sheldon never once appeared, but very cavalierly ſent a ſervant up, to aſk her in what manner ſhe had reſted. She could hold no longer, but came down to Sheldon, weeping

weeping all the way with indignation; and as ſoon as ſhe beheld him, could have thrown herſelf into his arms, but that ſhe ſaw beforehand he was ready to withdraw them.

With the greateſt ſtoiciſm or indifference in his countenance, he aſked what ailed her, that ſhe ſeemed ſo agitated? Ah, my ſon, what ails me! anſwered ſhe. What ails me! do you aſk your mother ſuch a queſtion? Is it you I was ſo fond of that thus treat me? that dare drive your mother out of her apartment?—Is it only that, rejoined Sir Philip. It is meant for—Meant for? and for whom? replied my lady.—For my wife, ſaid Sheldon.—For your wife? returned his mother. What, then, are you going to be married?—Yes, directly, Madam, was the young man's anſwer.—And I kept a ſtranger to the matter? interrupted the diſtracted lady.—Yes, began the ſon; for *every one*, you know, *in this world for himſelf, dear mother:* that, you muſt remember, is a favourite maxim with you. I will ſhow you my intended. It was never my deſign to hide her from you; but, perhaps, you might have diſapproved my choice, and I diſclaimed thoſe little regulations ſome men have thought proper to eſtabliſh in the world, as matters of reciprocal convenience; ſuch, for inſtance, among others, as they call propriety and filial duty, but which (truſt me) are no more than clogs upon the liberty of ſimpletons.

On this he called a ſervant, and gave orders that

that his Leonora ſhould come down.—Who is that Leonora you call yours? ſaid Lady Sheldon.—Who, replied Sir Philip, as I ſaid juſt now, but my intended?—And the word was hardly uttered, when a little pert, vain creature, tolerably handſome, but without deportment, decency, or manner, and ridiculouſly overloaded with a heap of ribbands, furbelows, and flounces, like a painted doll, came tripping into the apartment. Sheldon would have introduced her to his mother; but his mother ſeeing him hold out his hand, drew back as if ſhe had been frightened.—But what whims are theſe, good mother? ſaid Sir Philip; and who is it you would treat in this contemptuous manner? The beſt opera-ſinger in the world that I have brought from London with me.—The beſt opera ſinger! and to marry her! replied my lady with the greateſt indignation.—Yes, to marry me directly, interrupted Leonora, and in lawful wedlock. I would never have come down to ſhut myſelf up in this out-of-faſhion piece of ruins, which you call a houſe, perhaps, for any other purpoſe. I have here in writing, properly drawn up, Sir Philip's promiſe; and I hope, mama, yourſelf too will become a party in the matter, and ſubſcribe your name.—Subſcribe my name!—A ballad ſinger! cried my lady. Sooner ſhall my hand rot off, than be a ſharer in Sir Philip's infamy.

On this the bride prepared to anſwer, but her agitation would not let her: ſhe fell back into

into a chair and fainted, or at leaſt my lady thought ſo. Sheldon called out for aſſiſtance, when two ſervants entered, and the little Signora inſtantly was carried off, and proper aids adminiſtered for her recovery in another chamber.

When the buſtle had ſubſided, hear me while I ſpeak a word or two, if you have any ſenſe of decency, began my lady, with a wrathful eye, ſwoln heart, and quivering pair of lips. Expect not my conſent to this deteſtable proceeding. What! an opera girl! a wretch that has no character——a—a—But, madam, interrupted Sheldon calmly, you aſtoniſh me. Can it be poſſible you ſhould have thus got back again into thoſe narrow notions I imagined you had utterly renounced?—No character! And what, pray, is the meaning of that word, to people that have brought themſelves to think as we do? Fie upon you, my good mother. Hardly have you left your maſters, but you fall again into your former narrow way of thinking. But for my part, I am not ſo fickle. Thanks to your attention, I have ſeen to demonſtration that ſelf intereſt is every thing in this world, and been taught to part with all thoſe little prejudices that reſtrain us in the world. I have a right, I think, and you muſt think ſo likewiſe, to diſpoſe in any manner I think proper of myſelf, and you ſhall find you have not recommended a dull ſcholar to your maſters, who will ſuffer his new wiſdom to lie dormant and unexerciſed

erciſed within him. If my conduct does not pleaſe you, (that it does not, I begin to ſee, and am aſtoniſhed) you know what you have to truſt to. An annuity, ſome little ſum of money, ſhall be ſettled on you, ſuch as will ſuffice for what you want, and you may live juſt where you pleaſe, and in the manner you think beſt. —Hold, ingrate, interrupted here his mother, I am ſtruck with horror; where is that benevolence of ſoul I once knew in you?—Ingrate, anſwered Sheldon; you miſtake: there are no ingrates, mother; take that firſt; ſince every thing we may appear to do for others, in reality is done to ſerve ourſelves. We are ourſelves, and ſhould be, the ſole central part of every action we engage in; and in lieu of that benevolence of ſoul you ſay you once knew in me, you ſhould write down every where SELF-LOVE. This is the doctrine we have both of us been taught. Beſides, let it be granted, I now treat you not much like a ſon; I am, you know, a neceſſary agent, and your anger is unjuſt and uſeleſs. Who knows better what I ſpeak of now than you? Have not our teachers proved that we are irreſiſtibly drawn on by motives? So that every thing we do muſt of neceſſity be done. Remember, mother, that triumphant axiom of our Mentor, which he uſed to iterate ſo often; namely: *It was as impoſſible that* Julius Cæſar *ſhould not die by* Brutus *in the Senate, as it is that two and two ſhould not make four*. Acknowledge that unanſwerable.

Ah,

Ah, my dear, dear ſon, my deareſt Sheldon, ſaid his mother; it is I then that have ruined you, I now ſee clearly. It is I myſelf that have eradicated every virtue in your heart, by forcing your attention to the monſter, whoſe pernicious doctrine has deceived me. What broad day light do you not at once pour in upon my underſtanding? But, my deareſt Sheldon, 'tis not my own intereſt I am now endeavouring to eſtabliſh, but, believe me, yours. Your diſpoſition was of late ſo good and placid, you deſerved the eſteem and friendſhip of all worthy people. What then will the conſequences be of ſuch an alteration in your conduct? You will frighten them. They will avoid connection with you, after having looked on that connection as a matter of ſuch ſatisfaction. In the name of God, then, be yourſelf again: For my part, I am now convinced, falſe principles make monſters of us. Let us therefore both be what we were before we came to London. Aid me to forgive myſelf the petty pride with which my teachers filled my mind, together with the part I took in your unhappy change. Ah, Sheldon, do not marry Leonora; do not vilify yourſelf ſo greatly; puniſh only me. I am convinced I merit puniſhment; but as for you, ſtill think yourſelf entitled to your own reſpect.

My lady had ſcarce ſaid theſe words, when Sheldon tenderly embraced and kiſſed her, while a ſtream of tears flowed from him. Oh, my deareſt

deareſt mother, ſaid he, as articulately as the agitation he was in would then permit, have I preſerved you then from the contagion? I had only need to put into a train of action ſome of thoſe ſeductive principles you learned from books or converſation with your maſters, to raiſe horror in you. Oh, my dear, kind mother, pardon me the ſeeming inſolence I thought I was neceſſitated to put on, that I might bring about the criſis I expected. Ah! did you but know, dear mother, what it coſt me to reſolve on ſuch a ſtep, and how much I have ſuffered, that I might not contradict myſelf; for twenty times or oftener was I tempted to fall down before you, as I do, at preſent, till ſuch time as you have granted me your pardon.—Till ſuch time as I have granted you my pardon, virtuous Sheldon! ſaid the lady; but 'tis you that ſhould be called upon to grant me yours. Riſe therefore, worthy ſon of an unworthy mother, who will have no other guide in future than yourſelf. But tell me, Sheldon, who that Leonora may be. The new chambermaid, replied Sir Philip, of your friend the counteſs, who has played her part to admiration, (for the fainting fit, no leſs than the Signora, was put on,) and who intreats your pardon. I have need myſelf, ſaid Lady Sheldon, of forgiveneſs, and ſhall grant it to another, upon that account, more readily. What very much aſtoniſhes me on reflection is, that I could no how ſee through the deception. Truly, with a ſmile upon his coun-

tenance, returned the ſon, I was a little fearful you would do ſo, and yet far from wiſhing that event would follow.—You were in the right, replied my lady. It was neceſſary I ſhould be deceived, and paſs a whole night's ſpace in meditating on myſelf and you, by way of fitting me for that repentance I deſign in future, by my conduct, to give proof of.

At theſe words Sir Philip made the ſignal previouſly agreed upon, when Leonora, with her miſtreſs, reappeared, no longer, as before, in a diſguiſe, but dreſſed like what ſhe was, and in the attitude of one ſoliciting forgiveneſs. Lady Sheldon, in a tranſport of delight, embraced her; as ſhe did the counteſs alſo, and was ever afterwards the worthieſt mother in that neighbourhood, of which, but for Sir Philip's pious ſtratagem, ſhe would have been the unworthieſt.

THE

# THE FORTUNATE ENCOUNTER.

A

# DRAMA,

IN

# THREE ACTS.

## THE CHARACTERS.

A FATHER.

LUCY, *his wife.*

TWO CHILDREN.

A TRAVELLER.

SIMON, *a ſervant.*

THE

# FORTUNATE ENCOUNTER.

## ACT I.

SCENE. *A cottage, with the ground before it.*

THE FATHER, *(with a fowling-piece: he places it againſt a tree.)* So then, I am returned, but empty, after having been from home ſix hours and upwards, and not met with any thing. Diſtreſsful ſituation! not to have a loaf, and go in queſt of birds! Poor innocents! to be intent on killing them, and yet, juſt puniſhment of cruelty! to ramble over the whole country, with a burning ſun above me, and ſhoot nothing. Death, at laſt, muſt terminate our miſery. I will go in doors; but, no; let me endeavour, firſt of all, if I am able, to compoſe my countenance, and hide the grief that preys upon me. Gracious God! let not my ſorrow be perceived by Lucy. Virtuous woman! with what courage do you not endure the indigence that overwhelms us! I behold you, without murmur ſuffer, and do every thing you can to reconcile me, likewiſe, to my fortune. You lament, in ſecret; but, whenever

ever I approach, conceal your tears, leſt they ſhould add to my affliction. Bounteous Providence! thou wilt reward her virtues, in the end, with better days; for ſhe deſerves them. It is I, ſad thought! yes I, that am the cauſe of her unhappineſs, and that, too, of our children. And what adds to my misfortune is, that I enjoy no means of recompenſing her unprecedented generoſity. But, in the interim, our poverty increaſes daily, and exiſtence grows more burdenſome. The little property I had, has been employed in the ſupply of our extreme neceſſity. Alas! to whom ſhall I apply for ſuccour; My own father gives me up: my letters penned no leſs affectionately than I could,—thoſe ſpeaking pictures of my miſery, have not influenced him. Never has he deigned to ſend me even one anſwer; nor for five years paſt, expreſſed a wiſh to be informed of any thing about me. Is it poſſible, that any father ſhould appear ſo cruel as to leave a ſon unſuccoured, that he knows is to the laſt degree diſtreſſed! and all my crime is that of having thought it was my duty to fulfil, in oppoſition to his orders, thoſe repeated promiſes I made a worthy woman, deſtitute, 'tis true, of fortune's favours: but endowed with every excellence to counterbalance what ſhe wanted in the article of riches. Virtuous Lucy! after having yielded to my love, and frequently reiterated adjuration, had my father's council been complied with, I ſhould cruelly

cruelly have left you to remorſe and infamy; and with indifference, ſeen the ſcorn of thoſe, who always judge unjuſtly, fall on her who merited, upon the other hand, their higheſt approbation. How, in that caſe, could I have endured the burden of that wealth, my father would have made me heir to? Would not the inceſſant execrations of my conſcience have for ever darkened all the otherwiſe ſerene and chearful thoughts within my heart? I find, at leaſt, in ſpite of every bitter ſorrow I bend under, ſome alleviation of my grief in that reciprocal compaſſion our affection gives us to experience, and that mutual wiſh we have to make our miſery leſs burdenſome. Perhaps, too, (for 'tis poſſible) theſe tears we ſhed for one another, will not always flow as plenteous as at preſent, and my father take compaſſion on me.—But here comes the youngeſt of my two dear children. Gracious God, what will become of them? Let me, however, inſtantly dry up my tears, and take a chearful countenance. Poor child! why ſhould I grieve his gentle heart, by telling him I have been weeping?

*A little boy, (the younger Son,) comes in.*

The YOUNGER SON *(running to his father.)* My dear father!

The FATHER. Well, my deareſt child, whence come you, pray? You ſeem quite joyful.

The YOUNGER SON. I have been at Johnſon's Hill, and ſtopped ſome time with—what's his name there? he that takes care of the ſheep. Poor fellow! how I pity'd him!

The FATHER. And, why, my child?

The YOUNGER SON. Becauſe, papa, I found him ſitting by a tree, and crying, juſt as if he would have broke his heart. I have not eat a bit of bread to day, ſaid he, and die of hunger. Look you here, ſaid I, take what I have, and held him out the bit of bread I had myſelf for dinner; and which, luckily I had preſerved. Indeed papa, I can aſſure you I was hungry too; but notwithſtanding that, I had a deal of pleaſure, when I ſaw him eat my bread up with ſuch appetite.

The FATHER. The dear good child! Heaven bleſs you for it!

The YOUNGER SON. Had the little boy had any thing to give, and ſeen me crying, like himſelf, for hunger, he would certainly have done the ſame.

The FATHER. And yet, you knew, I fancy, we had not another bit of bread, when you came home, to give you?

The YOUNGER SON. Yes, I did: but notwithſtanding, found a deal of pleaſure in beſtowing on the little fellow, what I had. And then, papa, have you not often told me, God does good to thoſe who feed the hungry?

The FATHER. Yes, I have indeed, and ſo he does, my child.—Oh heaven! how long muſt

muſt ſo much innocence be left to languiſh in a ſtate of want! *(He wipes his eyes.)*

The YOUNGER SON. But you are crying, I believe, papa: what ails you? pray don't cry.

The FATHER. I do not. Kiſs me, my dear fellow; and now run as faſt as you are able to the mead — Your brother, I ſuppoſe, went out this morning?

The YOUNGER SON. Yes, papa.

The FATHER. And Simon?

The YOUNGER SON. He is gone out too.

The FATHER. Oh heaven! who would have thought it could have come to this? that I ſhould ever have been forced to ſell the only clothes I have! but money is more neceſſary now; and Simon will procure us money for them. So run to the mead, and ſee if Robert be not coming back. Should Simon meet you, bid him make haſte home. *(The little boy goes out.)*

The FATHER. The ſad condition of theſe innocents, diſtracts my heart! I never yet was left ſo much without reſource as now. *(He walks profoundly thoughtful.)* Oh heaven! the beſt of women! and her precious babes!—Oh thou, that haſt our fortunes in thy hands, be gracious to us. Help me, and permit not any murmur to eſcape my lips, when I reflect upon thy ways; nor let me ever doubt but that thy providence guides all things. Let me now go in; but firſt put on a chearful countenance; the

the ſharpneſs of this wind, aſſiſts in drying up my tears. *(He goes out.)*

SCENE. II. *A room within the cottage.*

LUCY *(at her work.)* 'Tis nearly four o'clock now, and my huſband not come home! Poor man! where, where can he be gone, to weep in ſilence? for in truth, he is too ſenſible of his affliction. Therefore am I under the neceſſity myſelf, of checking my complaints, when he is nigh me. To the youngeſt of my little ones alone can I communicate my griefs. Without afflicting him, I may pour out my tears. Thrice happy ſtate of childhood. I can weep for his misfortune, ſince he anſwers with a ſmile.—But I ſee my huſband coming. Ah, my love!

*To* Lucy *enters the* Father.

The FATHER. My loveliеſt love! how have you paſſed your time, this morning, ſince I left you?

LUCY. Well enough, my deareſt. I have been as chearful as I can be, when I am not in your company. I ſung while I was working, and that way beguiled the time a little.

The FATHER. Dear, dear ſpouſe! I cannot but admire your courage in affliction. You appear to me a perfect heroine.

LUCY. It is my happineſs that I poſſeſs you; and in you, that virtue which upholds my

my courage. I am not unhappy when you do not think yourſelf ſo.

The FATHER. Heavens! what tenderneſs for me! and yet, it is this very tenderneſs that has reduced you to the ſituation you are in, and would have brought another woman, ſuch as women are in general, to deſpair.

LUCY. My deareſt huſband, I beſeech you, by whatever you yourſelf think ſacred, not to trouble in this manner, as you do continually, our repoſe. Believe me, your reproaches wound that tenderneſs you have diſcovered in me. I proteſt, that my tranquillity is not fictitious. I am happy in poſſeſſing ſuch a huſband; and without you, any happineſs would really be unſupportable.

The FATHER. 'Tis true, then, my dear partner, is it, that amid our poverty and hopeleſs ſituation, that ſerenity I ſee upon your countenance is not affected for the purpoſe of concealing your diſtreſs, but comes from an interior calm of mind?

LUCY. I know not what diſtreſs is, when you do not ſeem yourſelf diſtreſſed.

The FATHER. What goodneſs!

LUCY. Recollect, that in the world there muſt be multitudes unhappier by a deal than we are. Muſt a voluntary diſcontentedneſs of diſpoſition make us, then, unhappier by a deal than they?

The FATHER. It cannot make us poorer; for you know, the birds are leſs ſo than ourſelves.

ſelves. Alas! we have no food remaining in the cottage. I have all this morning, for ſix hours and more, been rambling into one field, firſt, and then into another: I ſet out, in hopes my gun would bring down ſomething, but had not a ſingle ſhot. I could, however, bear my diſappointments, ſince your courage comes to the aſſiſtance of my weakneſs; but dear wife, when I behold our children, and behold them weeping, is it poſſible I ſhould not feel my heart quite overwhelmed with anguiſh?

LUCY. But a ſituation that, thank heaven, does not exiſt at preſent, being only an imaginary one, ſhould not abaſe our courage. Be compoſed. Our eldeſt boy is gone to Norton, as laſt night, you know, it was agreed on, with the patterns he has had the art to draw: he will diſpoſe of them for ſomething, and bring home his baſket with proviſion for us. We may likewiſe hope good news from Simon, who will very ſoon be back.

The FATHER. Dear Lucy, I am quite aſhamed, when I reflect, my tears have ſuch faſt hold upon me.

LUCY *(ſhewing him a piece of work.)* And beſides all this, ſee here a piece of work that I have juſt now finiſhed. I will ſend it by the coachman up to London, who will ſell it for me. Let us, therefore, not loſe patience, but reflect upon the paſt, for often we have been in deſperate circumſtances, and relief was nearer than we thought it was.

The

The FATHER. Your elevated ſoul is in itſelf a fund of conſolation to me; but, for my part, I ſhall always find it utterly impoſſible to ſtifle my diſtruſt and apprehenſions. What, for I muſt harp for ever on that ſubject, will become of our poor children? Being, as we are, abandoned by mankind, what pathway can we point them out to get a maintenance in life?

LUCY. The pathway pointed out by virtue, is infallible.

The FATHER. Yes, yes, my Lucy; but then virtue in affliction, notwithſtanding, muſt exhibit a ſad ſpectacle. And think, too, how extremely difficult it muſt be to preſerve that virtue free from blot, when from without, diſtreſs of every kind aſſails us. All the happineſs I wiſh then is, that they may lead a life of labour, (ſince that muſt be) not confounded with the loweſt claſs of people. They might be ſucceſsful in the world, and yet not riſe ſo high as from their birth they had a right to hope they ſhould. Pray heaven, the ſighings a hard-hearted father forces from me, never may torment his ſoul! Pray heaven, they never may riſe up againſt him, when his grandſon, on ſome future day, may come before his gate to get a bit of bread.

LUCY. Alas, why fancy this hard fortune will befal them. Infinite, I need not tell you, are the ways by which God's providence conducts mankind to fortune.

The FATHER. Doubtleſs; but 'tis hardly poſſible we ſhould purſue thoſe ways, when we are plunged into adverſity; for, recollect what we have both of us experienced: hardly had my father given me up, and every thing I had was ſpent, when all the world forſook me likewiſe. What was our reſource?

LUCY. The ſalutary one of flying for relief to ſolitude, to this delightful country, and relying for aſſiſtance upon Providence.

The FATHER. 'Tis ſo far well, my dear; but this is hardly the reſource I wiſh my children. What poor happineſs, juſt heaven, is that when we have need of all our reaſon to preſerve us from deſpair!

LUCY. The ſituation providence has brought us to, and that I doubt not for the wiſeſt purpoſes, is very different from the worſt we might have poſſibly been placed in. I went yeſterday to viſit our poor neighbour. Is not her condition more deplorable than ours? Far advanced in years, without the little ſuccours we can boaſt of, and tormented with a grievous malady. Alas, dear huſband, all the gloomy proſpect of her life, is only poverty and pain; and yet, will you believe it? I have hardly ever ſeen her peeviſh and impatient. She has hopes of nothing in the world but death, which poſſibly may not, till after many years of ſuffering, put a period to it. We, then, that have had a better education, we whoſe minds have been more cultivated,—ſhould we make ourſelves

ſelves more miſerable than our neighbour is, through want of courage to ſupport a burden of affliction much leſs heavy?

The FATHER. Certainly we ſhould not.

LUCY. Neither will we; but applaud the wiſdom of God's providence, directing all things to the happieſt iſſue, and not watching with leſs care the leaſt than greateſt objects. He preſerves the bird that warbles in our trees, the fly that buzzes round about us, and the worm that crawls beneath our feet. And ſhould we then repine at our condition in the world, becauſe it is not viewed with envy? Be of courage, and ſurvey this beauteous ſpot of country ſmiling round us. A clear ſky, and tranquil evening, are preparing to bid farewell to the ſetting ſun, that ſun which has brought with it, one more day, and carried us thus nearer the determination of our lot.

The FATHER. A thouſand and a thouſand thanks, dear partner, for this conſolation you afford me. For, what happineſs to me, that I poſſeſs you! It is you that fortify my feeble reaſon, and reſtore ſerenity within me. A ſerenity, however, that, alas, reſembles not the beauteous day-light of the ſpring, but rather of a night in winter, when the moon is at her height. Your reaſoning calms inceſſantly this thought, this overwhelming thought, ſo apt to riſe within me; namely, that my father has entirely baniſhed me, that he has blotted me for ever from his heart, that when he renders

his laſt breath, a ſon that he has driven from him will not have it in his power to weep beſide his dying bed, and kneel to have a bleſſing. Oh my father! my dear father! when that fatal moment comes, though I unhappily be abſent, deign to think a little of me and forget not an unhappy youth that has incurred, without intention, your reſentment; but to whom, when every thing has been alledged againſt him, you gave life.

LUCY. Oh, beſt of huſbands, your own reaſon, of itſelf, would have diſperſed thoſe gloomy apprehenſions. I did but ſuggeſt ſuch arguments of conſolation as yourſelf, at any other time, could not have failed to think of. With reſpect, my deareſt, to that wiſh you form relating to your father, God above us grant it may be to the full accompliſhed. I for my part——

The FATHER. Do not finiſh, I beſeech you, or reproach yourſelf on this occaſion. Could I liſten to you, I ſhould be the baſeſt of mankind, and utterly unworthy of the greateſt happineſs, the happineſs of being what I am, the huſband of ſo excellent a woman.

LUCY. No, Marcellus, I will not offend your love; but, on the other hand, I ought to make you the partaker of my hopes. What, therefore, if your father ſhould be reconciled to you again? If at this moment, and while we are ſpeaking, he ſhould be ſolicitous to know the ſituation of a ſon——

The

The FATHER. Yes—happy thought, that formerly diffuſed the greateſt pleaſure over the moſt melancholy moments of my life; that often has afforded me whole days of happineſs, while I was waiting with anxiety, but always to no purpoſe, for ſome anſwer to my moving letters—letters, that had any of them fallen accidentally into ſome ſtranger's hands, that never had heard either of us mentioned, would have forced a tear of pity from him. And if ſo, can I believe, my father—

LUCY. It would be the greateſt action of injuſtice done a father, who once loved you with ſuch ardour of affection, could we——

The FATHER. Yes, the greateſt. Is it poſſible, dear father, you ſhould always hate me, you that formerly ſo loved me, and remarked with inexpreſſible delight the gradual opening of my infant faculties. At thoſe afflicting moments when the recollection of your anger melts me into tears, my conſcience does not in the leaſt reproach me. Heavens! if I diſcovered in my conduct the leaſt fault, your rage would be a burden not to be ſupported; but ſo far from thinking it ſo heavy, I perſuade myſelf, at times, you will at laſt entirely reinſtate me in your love. Perhaps already you lament the ſorrows of a ſon, to whom you cruelly refuſed all ſuccour. Heart-ſuſtaining thought! delightfulleſt of hopes! come then, and let me write him one more letter: let me tell him every thing our diſmal ſituation and reciprocal

affliction can inſpire my heart with. In the other room I will ſit down immediately, and put my thoughts to paper. I ſhall ſtand in need of your aſſiſtance. Come, my deareſt, with me.

LUCY. Yes, with all my heart.

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## ACT II.

### SCENE I. *Before the cottage.*

SIMON *(with a baſket, and alone.)* Are they both within? They are not in the outward room, or I ſhould ſee them through the window. I have then a few more minutes to compoſe myſelf, if in the interim, they don't come down to interrupt me, which I hope they will not. 'Tis, however, a bad ſign that I am thus afraid to meet them. *(He puts his hand upon his heart.)* Wherefore is my heart thus agitated? wherefore beats it with ſuch violence within me? What is that oppreſſive burden that weighs thus upon my conſcience? No. Importunate idea, vaniſh, nor reproach me with an action I have done indeed, but from the beſt of motives. Courage, therefore, I am thus confuſed for having ventured on a deed, which any other ſituation I could poſſibly have found myſelf in, would have rendered villainous. It is not, then, a crime with which I ſhould accuſe myſelf. The urgency of our affairs, and my deſign in doing it, both equally acquit

acquit me. But I fear my maſter may come out before my countenance is ſettled. (*He pulls a bag out full of money.*) Here is a good ſum of money, and enough to keep us many months! but how did I come by it? 'Tis the firſt time in my life I ever did the like: and ſhall be, I may ſay, the laſt. I had much rather undergo the greateſt miſery, and live with peace of conſcience, than have gold and ſilver in abundance, but no peace within me. It was only to alleviate our diſtreſſes I took ſuch a ſtep. And is it juſt, ſo many worthleſs wealthy ones ſhould live entirely at their eaſe, while my good maſter, with his wife and children, die of hunger in this ſolitary quarter of the country? no, my very blood boils in me when I ſee ſo many proud ones make no more account of the unhappy, than they would do of brute beaſts, and diſſipate in criminal expences and exceſſes, what the miſery of others has obtained them.—Let the poor man, in the mean time, die of hunger; let the unhappy man even periſh and ſhed tears of blood, when he beholds thoſe monſters riot in the midſt of pleaſure, what is ſuch a ſight to them? 'Tis, therefore, juſtice only, that the poor ſhould have their portion in the good things of this world; and I am far from being ſorry now, for what I may have done.—I—I—But, heaven! I hear a noiſe. 'Tis ſome one coming.—No.—I tremble juſt as if I were this moment at the place of execution, and tied up. — Old blockhead, as I am!

Come

Come, then, I'll ſettle matters in a minute; and to anſwer as I ought, when I am got before my maſter, let me think what I ſhall ſay when he proceeds to aſk me how I got this money. I can never think of telling him the truth.— Peace, conſcience. — How one crime draws on another!—I muſt, therefore, tell a ſtory. I will ſay, then—What?—Sure never was there ſuch a ſtupid dog as I am!—But the truth is, I am in a very luckleſs ſituation. I will ſay, the gentleman—but no.—That would, indeed, ſeem very ſilly.—I ſhould be diſcovered, in that caſe, at firſt.—Aye, yes, I have it now.—Well thought of!—I will ſay, a well-dreſſed man, as I was coming home, that knew me, but that I myſelf had never ſeen before, at leaſt as far as I remember, met me, that he aſked me whether I was ſtill in Mr. Harvey's ſervice, adding, he commiſerated his unhappy ſituation, and that then—but hold, for ſome one or another is now coming. Yes, I ſee them; our two children. See if one can be alone a ſingle moment: — but, no matter. — I ſhall play my part to admiration.

*The two children enter.*

The ELDER SON. Ah dear Simon! welcome.

The YOUNGER SON. You are ſafe returned at laſt, then, Simon. (*Simon ſeems quite thoughtful.*)

The

The ELDER SON. What's the matter? You are in a bad humour.

SIMON. Yes, indeed, my deareſt little maſters, I muſt own there is a certain ſomething in my fooliſh noddle.

The YOUNGER SON. You are come home very late?

SIMON. Yes, yes; becauſe I had a deal to do when I was out.

The ELDER SON. And have you brought us any thing?

SIMON. Oh, yes; you will have victuals now in plenty.

The YOUNGER SON. Ah, my dear, dear Simon!

The ELDER SON. I, for my part, have been quite as far as Norton, where I ſold my patterns, and brought home a baſket full of victuals.

SIMON. That was well indeed. You are a lovely fellow. So, then, we ſhall want for nothing now?

The YOUNGER SON. I wiſh I were as old as you are, brother; for in that caſe I would work as heartily as you do, and get money for papa.

The ELDER SON. You will be ſo in time, dear brother.

The YOUNGER SON. Ah, my good, dear Robert; let me take you round the neck. You cannot think how heartily I love you. Our papa will be ſo glad, and ſo too will mama. We had not any thing to eat, but now ſhall have a great

a great deal left, when we have ſatisfied ourſelves. How much mama cried yeſterday, while ſhe was working! I came in, and found her at the frame, where ſhe was buſy with her needle ſewing; but ſhe did not ſee me enter. She did nothing elſe than cry and work, and I too fell a crying with her. Upon this ſhe heard me, and that inſtant wiped her eyes, as if ſhe did not wiſh that I ſhould ſee her cry; and yet I ſaw it very plainly.—Simon, tell us why both ſhe and my papa ſo often weep, when they are left alone? It hurts me when I ſee them both take on ſo ſadly.

The ELDER SON. And me too. So tell us, Simon, what can be the reaſon of it?

SIMON. Hem, hem, hem.—Why, I ſuppoſe, they cry, my little dears, becauſe you are ſo poor.

The ELDER SON. Poor! Simon? What we poor?

The YOUNGER SON. Our neighbours on the hill are poor, I will allow you; but not we.

THE ELDER SON. Yes, brother, we are ſometimes poor; no longer than this morning we were poor; but now are ſo no longer. We have plenty of good things to eat, and, far from being poor, are therefore very rich.

SIMON. The dear good children!

The ELDER SON. You are laughing, Simon; but pray tell me; are not *they* quite rich, who have enough to live on? Doubtleſs

Doubtleſs we are then quite rich, ſince we have now enough to live on for three days at leaſt.

SIMON. Poor little fellow!

The ELDER SON. But if we are poor, what then have thoſe, pray tell me, that are rich?

SIMON. What! every thing in plenty.

THE ELDER SON. And what, pray, have they to do with it? or how can they diſpoſe of what they have? Sure, we have every thing in plenty, that have more than we can make away with.

The YOUNGER SON. Aye, you make me think of him there with the eagles at his door: You know him, brother; he has more than he can make away with. He is therefore rich, and ſo are we too.

SIMON. Mr. Gripe is rich indeed; and yet, my children, neither he nor others like him are contented with their happy ſituation.

The YOUNGER SON. They muſt be ſtrange people then, I fancy.

The ELDER SON. Don't they give away among the poor a deal of what they have too much?

SIMON. Upon the other hand, they often rob them of the little they poſſeſs, to make themſelves ſtill richer.

The YOUNGER SON. Oh, I ſee now, Simon, you imagine you may joke with us, ſince we are children. Don't you think ſo, brother?

brother? Can you fancy there are any ſuch hard-hearted people in the world?

The ELDER SON. Not eaſily, I muſt confeſs: ſo pray be ſerious, Simon; for you know you ought not to tell ſtories.

SIMON. Every tittle I have ſaid is but too true; as you will find, when you are older. The great city, London, as they call it, nay, and every town in England, I may ſay, is full of ſuch hard-hearted people.

The ELDER SON. But if I had any thing to ſpare, I would beſtow it on our neighbour: aye, and ſo would our papa.

The YOUNGER SON. No doubt; and our mama, and I too.

The ELDER SON. I conceive no greater pleaſure in the world: I weep for joy, when any poor man thanks and bleſſes us ſo heartily for ſomething we have given him, though a trifle in itſelf, and what we found we could do eaſily without.

The YOUNGER SON. Yes, brother; and I likewiſe: for I know not how it comes about, but I am happier at that moment than if any one had ſaid: Here, little boy, I have the prettieſt bird you ever ſaw, to give you. Take it.

The ELDER SON. So pray tell me, Simon, why our pa' and ma' ſhould cry, becauſe they are not rich? For my part, I can hardly underſtand you.

SIMON. I ſuppoſe, becauſe they think that if they were ſo, they would then have much to

ſpare

ſpare, and might, by that means, get a deal of pleaſure, in relieving the diſtreſſes of the poor.

The ELDER SON. Aye, Simon, now I fancy you have gueſſed it: and I think that for the future I ſhall cry myſelf, becauſe I am not rich:—but let us go now go in. Come, brother; and you, Simon, come you likewiſe with us. *(The children go out.)*

SIMON. So, at laſt then they have left me. Yes, I ſee them going in. Firſt, let me wipe the ſweat from off my face, and follow after.—But what ſtory have I ready? they have put it all out of my head; and I muſt ſtudy it again.—On, on, old fool! don't tremble, but be firm, and lift your eyes up, if you can, a little.—I ſee plainly I am now too old to learn another trade, and more particularly one ſo different from the buſineſs that till yeſterday I lived by. All I wiſh is, it may ſerve me this one time.—Well then, I am to mention that a well-dreſſed man, as I was going home—a well-dreſſed man, but one that I had never ſeen before—Yes, yes, let me remember that;—but don't I ſee my maſter in the orchard?—Yes, among the trees, and with a paper in his hand: he muſt not be the firſt to ſpy me: ſo I'll go and meet him, as I uſed at ſchool to do my governor, when he would call me to be angry; that is, not ſtraight on, but in a crooked line. I have more reaſon, I am ſure, to do ſo now. *(He goes out.)*

SCENE II. *An orchard.*

*Enter the* Father.

The FATHER (*with a paper in his hand, and pencil: he walks forward, while he ſpeaks.*) It is eaſy for me, in my ſituation, to compoſe this letter, ſince 'tis not a fiction I am writing, but a ſcene of genuine miſeries; and yet, my Lucy's hints have been of ſervice to me, and corrected ſeveral expreſſions, which, on ſecond thoughts, I could not but diſcern required amendment, to affect, as I have every reaſon in the word to wiſh they might. The houſe affairs have drawn her off a little, and I have taken the advantage to come out. So beautiful a ſcene is not unlikely to engender thoughts within me, uſeful to my preſent purpoſe. I will, therefore, ſet to work again, and read as far as is already written. (*Reading.*)

" Honoured Father,

For it is not time, however long I have been ſilent, that can take away the right I have to call you ſo, becauſe my heart makes uſe of the expreſſion. In the name of heaven, let me entreat you to reflect upon my ſituation. I have been theſe three years ſilent, not from any contumacy, but becauſe my former letters could obtain no anſwer. I eſſay once more to move you; the proſperity of my beloved wife and helpleſs infants is a point of too much conſequence that I ſhould leave off writing to you,

you, from the thought that every time I give you a deſcription of my ſituation, and it is not noticed, one more wound is added to the number that diſtreſs my heart. For the advantage of thoſe three I dearly love, I will conſent to any thing, though like a bird confined within its cage, and panting to be free, I do but beat myſelf to death.

" I live here ſolitary; and retired from thoſe enjoyments I once taſted under your indulgent roof, to an obſcure and lonely quarter, where the whole ſociety I have is that of my poor family, and Simon; for without adverting to his obſtinate attachment to me, in the time of my misfortunes even, I muſt tell you, I can never live without a friend. Miſtake me not, however, ſir; for when I ſpeak of the obſcure and lonely quarter I am in, 'tis far from being my intention to lament it as a ſolitude; upon the other hand, 'tis rendered ſociable, if I may uſe the word, by the ſociety of thoſe in every ſenſe of the expreſſion, near and dear to my afflicted heart. Alas, without their ſweet ſociety, the moſt frequented part of the metropolis, if I were ſituated in it, I ſhould look on as a real ſolitude. Oh, ſir! what words ſhall I employ to give you an account of my two little babes; for, of my wife I need not ſpeak a word: ſhe is by this time paſſed the ſeaſon of her change, and is the ſelf-ſame miracle of goodneſs ſhe has always been; but my two little ones are altering every day from what

they were on the preceding, and continually for the better. I can ſee the traces of the grandfather in their ſweet little countenances. Would to God, when I ſurvey the clothes that cover them, I could diſcern the promiſe of that fortune they were born to, notwithſtanding your hard treatment of a ſon that always, he can ſay, has honoured you, and will continue always——"

Thus far have I written: till my wife returns let me walk up and down, and pen ſuch thoughts as may occur to my imagination. Or, upon the bench there, I may ſit and be at eaſe. I ſhall from thence obſerve my Lucy, when her work is done within doors, and ſhe comes to join me. *(He goes out on one ſide; and ſoon after, Simon, with his baſket, enters on the other.)*

SIMON. I have not had courage yet to face him.—Whither is he going? O, to ſet himſelf down, at his eaſe, beneath the pear tree. I will go up to him boldly.—So fear nothing, Simon; if he ſees me I muſt ſtand the brunt then, of the action.

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## A C T III.

SCENE. *The ground before the cottage, as at firſt.*

SIMON *(with his baſket, ſtill.)* There will be no end to this, I ſee, if we continue dogging one another thus: ſo, I have ſummoned up my reſolution to ſtand fire at once, and take my ſtation

ſtation here, where I muſt almoſt inſtantly be met with.—Yes; my maſter, as I gueſſed he would, is coming now along this path-way, and is juſt upon me.—Courage, Simon! there can be no further ſhifting for you;—ſo ſtand firm.

The FATHER (*entering.*) Ah Simon, welcome! are you not fatigued a little, my good friend? You muſt have walked a deal, and ſtand in need of reſt.

SIMON. Of reſt! not I, ſir. Here is what I have made ſhift to bring you. (*Shewing his baſket.*)

The FATHER. Take it in, and afterwards come back. A little air may, probably, refreſh you; after which, we will go in to ſupper: ſo, make haſte. (*Simon carries out the baſket, and his maſter keeps his eyes upon him.*) The honeſt man! What pleaſure would it give me, were I able, one day or another, to reward his ſervices. In fact, however long has been the interval ſince firſt I loſt my father, I ſtill cheriſh in my heart this ſweeteſt of all hopes. I will conclude, this very night, my letter, (*he puts it up into his pocket*) and diſpatch it by the poſt. God grant, I may not hope in vain. Till I have got his anſwer, what a dreadful interval of doubt! What rapture, ſhould this anſwer come, and ſpeak of reconciliation; 'Tis this hope, that in reality draws tears ſo often from me. How ſhall I endure the joy of an event ſo happy! How will not my tears bedew the bleſſed

characters his hand has traced upon the paper! but what deſperation, ſhould he ſtill remain inexorable! Hear me, bounteous Heaven, and let my humble ſupplication be accepted. Lay not on me a misfortune I can never bear, nor let my father breathe his laſt, while I am alienated from his favour.—But, ſuppoſe I were to ſend the faithful Simon to him with my eldeſt ſon. The journey is a long one, to be ſure; yet if that lovely child were to deliver with his little hand, my letter, and entreat a bleſſing for himſelf and his afflicted father,—but, vain project! the unfortunate are never at a loſs for plans of action, that but ſerve to render their unhappineſs more grievous: for by what means, could I poſſibly ſupport them during ſuch a journey?—*(He keeps walking to and fro, when he has ſaid thus much. The ſervant, in the interim, appears, but ſeems unwilling to come nigh: his maſter ſees him in this ſituation.)* You have left your load, then, in the houſe.—My good friend, Simon, I was juſt now wiſhing I was able to reward, in ſome ſort or another, your fidelity.

SIMON. Your goodneſs, ſir, rewards me more a great deal, than the trifling ſervice I have ever had it in my power to do you, merits.

The FATHER. No.—Not ſo,—dear Simon. I ſhall never be ſo happy as to ſhow you in what light I look upon your friendſhip: not that I want will, but am without the means. When firſt of all my father, and when afterward

ward all thoſe I was acquainted with, forſook me, you, of all my ſervants, were the only one that would not leave my ſinking fortune. You had nothing in the world to hope for, ſince you knew I had no hope myſelf. You have, however, followed me into this lonely quarter of the country; have put up with poverty and hunger, and neglected elſewhere to improve your fortune.

SIMON. Oh, my deareſt maſter, with what goodneſs you increaſe the value of the little I have done in your behalf, if it has any value! You ſhall never make me fancy I have been ſo ſerviceable to you as all this: but here,—*(taking out his bag.)*

The FATHER, What, Simon?

SIMON. Take it, ſir.

The FATHER. Take what?

SIMON. This money. It is yours. I had it given me in a village, not an hour ago, as I was coming home.

The FATHER. Given you? So much money? But what means all this?—Your hand is in a tremble!

SIMON. In a tremble! what, my hand?

The FATHER, Yes, Simon, and you tremble too, all over. What confuſes you at this rate?

SIMON, If I tremble, 'tis, I think—for joy.

The FATHER. For joy! You heſitate.—What ails you?

SIMON. Once more, take the money, ſir.

You

You want it greatly, as you know; and yet you don't rejoice.

The FATHER. To look at your pale countenance and agitated limbs, I cannot think I ſhould rejoice. For heaven's ſake, Simon, eaſe my doubts, and tell me where you got this money.

SIMON. I ſaid juſt this moment, it was given me. He I had it from, enjoined me not to tell you who he was.

The FATHER. Well, then, my friend, you need but take it back. I cannot conſcientiouſly accept it, if I know not how it came into your hands.

SIMON. And I, ſir, will not take it back.—What ſignify your ſcruples?

The FATHER. If you mean, then, I ſhould take it, tell me how you got it.

SIMON. To ſay nothing but the truth, then, ſir, I—I—I found it.

The FATHER. That's well ſaid. Come, courage, and lie boldly.—I ſuppoſe you little think how palpably, while you are ſpeaking, your own words betray you.

SIMON. Do you know my heart, ſir?

The FATHER. No: but when you would diſguiſe the truth, you go to work ſo awkwardly;—and, if it were not ſo, you contradict yourſelf.

SIMON. Well, then, I did not find it. It was given me, as I ſaid before.

The

The FATHER. Ah, Simon, was it given you?

SIMON. Yes, ſir, as I was coming home.

The FATHER. And he that gave it you,—was he a friend of mine?

SIMON. He muſt have been ſo, as I take it.—He firſt aſked me, whether I was ſtill in Mr. Harvey's ſervice.

The FATHER. And, what then?

SIMON. I anſwered him, I was: on which he held me out the money, ſaying, let your maſter have it, my good friend.

The FATHER. And you, for your part, did not know him?

SIMON. No, I cannot recollect I ever ſaw him. *(Aſide.)* Would to heaven this converſation were well over.

The FATHER. Yes; I think, indeed, you never ſaw him. You are right in that. And ſo, my good friend Simon, you would willingly deceive me, for the firſt time in your life, in ſuch a way as this?

SIMON. But, ſir, 'tis nothing but the truth I have been telling;——and, and, and——But let me leave you for a moment. I muſt go into the garden.——*(He goes out in viſible confuſion.)*

The FATHER. What can be the meaning of all this? Some myſtery is hid beneath ſuch ſtrange behaviour! Simon is extremely honeſt; that I know: but what could be the cauſe of his confuſion. His laſt ſtory ſeems

no

no likelier than the firſt. Then, alſo, how he trembled! I were beſt, I fancy, follow him; I cannot be at reſt till I have ſifted into this affair.

SIMON (*coming back, but ſtopping by the way.*) Forgive me, my dear maſter.—I can never bear the thought of having wanted ro deceive you. Such an accuſation would diſtract my heart, as long as I had breath. And, therefore, I will tell you every thing, that you may judge if what I have been doing is ſo bad, as ſome perhaps would think it.—I—

The FATHER. For Heaven's ſake, Simon, ſpeak,

SIMON. I ſtopped a traveller.

The FATHER. Stopped a traveller!

SIMON. I am going, ſir, to tell you every thing.——As I was coming home, I ſtopped, and ſat down on the ground to reſt myſelf. While I was in this poſture, I could not help thinking of your ſituation, and comparing it with that of many undeſerving wretches in the world, who ſeem as if they kept good fortune in their pay; who let the needy faint away with hunger at their door without aſſiſting them, and who, while they are diſſipating their abundance, plunge into the vileſt ſort of pleaſure. I was mad to think, how their avidity engroſſes to itſelf the good things of the world, and could not poſſibly refrain from indignation, at the idea that a gentleman ſo good as you are, and the beſt of huſbands, with a lady

like

like my miſtreſs, ſhould be ſundered from the world, and left without aſſiſtance, or the common ſuccour of humanity. Good Heavens! ſaid I within myſelf, ſhall two ſuch worthy people be without a bit of bread to eat, while ſuch a multitude of madmen, that ſcarce merit water, lay out more in one day on their follies, than would do to keep me a whole twelvemonth,—whilſt a gameſter ſtakes, with wonderful indifference, on a card, as much as an induſtrious man could gain by toiling till old age, but ſwears as if the devil had him, if ſome cripple begs a farthing; and while infamous ſeducers give more money to corrupt an innocent and unſuſpecting female, than an honeſt man would want to bring up his whole family of children? Does it ſuit with juſtice, that the gifts of fortune ſhould be thus divided? Were they not deſigned for all men? and if ſo, ſhall any individual arrogate the property of thouſands? I was thinking thus—

The FATHER—But Simon—

SIMON. Do not, my good maſter, interrupt me, I beſeech you, while I tell my ſtory my own way. I ſay, then, I was thinking thus, when I got up, and put myſelf again into the way: but, vexed with the reſult of what had been my meditation, when I turned on one ſide, and beheld a well dreſſed gentleman on horſeback, coming on full trot along a bridle path, that croſſed the public road. At ſuch a ſight as this, the evil ſpirit tempted me, I

muſt

muſt acknowledge: and I ſaid, but in a whiſper to myſelf, what ſin ſhould I commit, were I to make this traveller ſhare his money with me? There could not ſure be any ſin in ſuch a deed. Come on, then. Let him give me half his money. He *ſhall* give it me: it will ſuffice for our ſubſiſtence, I conjecture, many months. I wiſh not for abundance; but it is not juſtice we ſhould die of hunger. I had ſlacked my pace, while I was thus debating the affair within myſelf: ſo that the gentleman, by this time, was come up with me. I threw my baſket down among the buſhes. I was ſomehow or another ſecretly impelled to act as you ſhall hear; for never did my heart before ſo violently beat within my boſom. Stop, ſaid I, or rather ſtammered out the word. With one hand I ſeized faſt his bridle, and held out my cutlaſs in the other. Let me have, this inſtant, half your money; and beware of making any noiſe, or I ſhall call to my companions here hard by, and you will fare the worſe. The gentleman, as it appears from his behaviour, had leſs courage than myſelf, or he might eaſily have ſeen my agitation. He delivered me this bag. I took it; and, as pale as any ſpectre, ran to hide myſelf among the buſhes. I could hardly think but that the whole tranſaction was a dream. In ſhort, when I conſider the affair, I cannot think I am as bad as any other thief.

The

The FATHER. Oh heavens! you cannot think it! how could you reſolve on ſuch an action?

SIMON. Truly I could wiſh the gold had melted in my hand.—And yet, if you conſider every circumſtance, there may be ſaid a great deal in my favour.

The FATHER. No, no, Simon: nothing can be offered in excuſe of a deliberate crime.

SIMON. But, what, if I deſigned not to commit a crime?

The FATHER. I ſhall be quite uneaſy, till this money is again in the poſſeſſion of its lawful owner.

SIMON. But where find him? Curſed money! If you did but know, ſir. He reſigned it with the air of one who had a greal deal more. No doubt, but 'tis a very trifle with reſpect to him. Nor is the ſum conſiderable in your thoughts, for any other reaſon than becauſe it is ſo long ſince you have ſeen a deal of money at one time.

The FATHER. But have we any right to take one farthing forcibly from others? No, no, Simon. Go, then, to the ſpot where you committed this raſh action; you may, poſſibly, ſtill meet the traveller, ſomewhere thereabouts.

SIMON. It ſeems, then, you would have me, ſir——

The FATHER. Well, what?

SIMON. Go out in ſearch of this ſame traveller, and return him back his gold?

The FATHER. Yes, certainly.

SIMON. Well, then, I will return this moment and do every thing I can to find him out: but, liſten, don't I hear the trampling of a horſe. Who can it be? If he has found out where I live, and ſhould be come to hang me. But why ruſh into his way, then;—Here is ſome one.—Lord have mercy on me! Hide me, hide me! 'tis the traveller.

The TRAVELLER (*entering.*) I have loſt my way, ſir, in this unfrequented quarter of the country; and my ſervant, that I ſent before me, to enquire which way the road might lie, has not been able to rejoin me. Take it not amiſs, then, that I come——(*Perceiving Simon.*) Oh Heaven! am I again, then, got into ſuch company?

SIMON (*aſide.*) Yes, yes; I thought ſo: 'tis my traveller indeed. (*Stealing farther off.*)

The FATHER. You ſeem, ſir, greatly agitated.—What may be the reaſon of it?

The TRAVELLER. You will pardon me, if I inform you; and not treat me roughly afterwards, I hope. The gentleman, your friend there, (*pointing to Simon*) has been ſo conſiderate as to take but half my money. I delivered him much more, and have at preſent ſcarce ſufficient for what's left me of my journey.—Should you take that alſo—

The FATHER. Pardon me, good ſir, if I correct you in an error. No, you are not got among a band of thieves. We are unfortunate

tunate indeed, and forced by many grievous circumſtances into this retreat; but not the deſperadoes you ſuppoſe. Forgive the fear you have been put to, and receive your money back again. I have it for you.—Simon.

SIMON *(drawing nigh, and trembling.)* You behold me trembling, ſir, all over: there is what I was ſo graceleſs as to make you give me, prompted to the action by deſpair. I was, indeed, ſir, on the point, this very moment, of returning to the ſpot, that if I found you, which I thought was not impoſſible, I might return it. One thing in my favour, ſir, is this, that as you ſee, I have not opened yet the bag. Our poverty, and the diſtreſsful ſituation my good maſter here, and his afflicted family are in, both put me on this action, which, from any other motive in the world, I ſhould not have been brought to do. Heaven pardon me. There take your money, ſir: it would have been a torment to me all my life. *(The Father during this whole ſpeech of Simon's, gazes at the Traveller with fixed attention.)*

The TRAVELLER *(to the Father.)* Forgive, ſir, my injuſtice. Your unhappy ſituation intereſts me, and I beg you to accept the money, which your ſervant ſhall not give me back. I wiſh I had a larger ſum about me, to ſupply your exigences; but when people travel,—

The FATHER. You will pardon me, I hope, if I refuſe the generous favour you deſign us. I can never take it; for, without conſidering

ſidering by what means your money came into our hands, it would be doing you no leſs than an additional injuſtice, were I to accept a ſum you want for the expences of your journey. *(Aſide.)* Into how much doubt, great God! do not theſe features throw me?

The TRAVELLER. You will not permit me, then, to do you any ſervice? I have ſtill remaining a ſufficient ſum of money for my journey, without wiſhing to have this, which I will therefore give your ſervant, ſince you will not take it, ſir, yourſelf.

SIMON. Give *me*, ſir, ſo much money? Is it poſſible? and is it all my own? For my part, as you ſee, I make no ſcruple of accepting it, but thank your generoſity with all my heart.

The FATHER. Let me, then, likewiſe add my thanks to his. Oh, ſir, I was not always in this ſituation. I once had it in my power, believe me, to do other people good. Forgive me, ſir; I cannot, at the recollection of paſt times, refrain from tears.

The TRAVELLER. My friend, and let me call you by that name, your whole deportment tells me very plainly you were born to better days, than what you ſee at preſent. You have doubtleſs undergone misfortunes in the world?

The FATHER. Ah, Sir, we have nothing left us, but our virtue and a guiltleſs conſcience.

The TRAVELLER. Your condition then is to

to be envied. I am not without the gifts of fortune at command; but would give all I am poſſeſſed of, would it purchaſe me my former peace of mind. I have myſelf been guilty of a great injuſtice, and the recollection of it is an everlaſting torment to me. Like a frightful ghoſt, remorſe purſues my footſteps through the world, and I have cauſe, alas! to fear I never ſhall be able to atone for my injuſtice to the party I have wronged, however I repent of having wronged him. Yes, Sir, mix your tears with mine, I merit your compaſſion; and old age will only be a galling burden to me, if I cannot find the object I am now come forth in queſt of. You, Sir, are yet young. Preſerve, then, oh preſerve the precious treaſure of a pure and therefore peaceful conſcience. It will be a ſolace to you in the years of your old age. What a misfortune, gracious God! how much is not that individual to be pitied, whoſe tormented conſcience tears him in the evening of his days, and threatens to bring down his age with ſorrow to the tomb. Though I am old, as you may ſee, and feeble, I have long been under the neceſſity of bearing the fatigue of journey after journey, to find out the footſteps of a couple that my fault has very poſſibly reduced to miſery, and whoſe indigence, alas! may have already terminated their ſad life. If it be ſo, great God! ſhow me at leaſt the ſpot where they lie buried. I will fix my habitation by it. I will paſs away in tears the remnant of

my

my days where they lie ſleeping, and repoſe me by it, when no more. Unhappy as I am! You weep. I thank your pity, and deſerve it.

The FATHER *(Aſide.)* How covetous of hope are men in their misfortunes—but it cannot be. No, never. *(To the Traveller.)* Your affliction, Sir, has moved me. You are an unhappy father; and myſelf——

LUCY *(Coming in.)* How, huſband, do you ſuffer a reſpectable old man to ſtand thus out of doors. Be pleaſed, Sir, to come into our poor cottage. You may reſt, at leaſt, a little.

The TRAVELLER. With all my heart, good Madam, having your permiſſion. I can ſee, beforehand, I ſhall paſs an hour or two, in your ſociety, with real ſatisfaction.

SIMON. Ah, Sir, what do I behold? Good heavens! Or am I in a dream? What is the meaning of this paper here among your money?

The FATHER. Well, what is it?

SIMON *(To the Traveller.)* Is it you yourſelf, Sir? Is this name I read here yours? This note of hand, Sir, is it payable to you?

The TRAVELLER. Yes, yes, it is.

SIMON. And is your name then Harvey?

The TRAVELLER. Yes.

SIMON. Oh, gracious God! Embrace then one another, while I weep for joy. Here is your father, Sir, and here your ſon Marcellus. This, too, is my miſtreſs.

The FATHER. Is it poſſible? My father!

The TRAVELLER. Can you be my children?

dren? Gracious heavens! My ſon! my daughter! Is it you I ſee then? You that indigence has ſo disfigured? Oh, good God! what miſery has not my injuſtice brought upon you both? But, yes, you are my ſon.

The FATHER. My father! my dear father!

LUCY. And may I too call you by that name? Oh, let me bathe this venerable hand of yours, Sir, with my tears! My deareſt father!

SIMON *(Brings out both children from the cottage.)* And do you, dear children, kneel before him likewiſe; for this gentleman I ſhow you is your father, juſt as much as he there you have always called ſo.

The ELDER SON. What this gentleman my father, Simon?

SIMON. Yes, your father; don't you ſee? He kiſſes you, as if he were ſo.

The YOUNGER SON. We have then two fathers. Kiſs *me* now then, father, 'tis my turn.

SIMON. Sweet little innocents! And is it poſſible, that in a moment thus we ſhould be made completely happy.

The TRAVELLER. Riſe, my children: my ſweet little ones, riſe too. Suſtain me, my dear ſon. My tranſports are ſo great, I cannot poſſibly ſupport them. Show me all among you. Theſe are then your children? Harvey, my dear ſon; and Lucy, my dear daughter, take my benediction. Oh, great God, and Maſter of the univerſe! thou haſt concluded then my ſufferings. It is now three years and upwards

ſince

ſince remorſe excited in me for the treatment I had ſhewn you, my dear ſon, oppreſſed me with unutterable anguiſh. It is now three years and upwards ſince a grievous malady almoſt reduced me to the doors of death; while my injuſtice added horrors to the ſcene. In ſuch a diſmal ſtate, how often did I not bedew my bed with tears, and dwell upon your name! Oh, father of my life, I cried, reſtore me but this once, and do not take me from among the living, till ſuch time as I have found my ſon. Reſtore him to me. Let me weep the conſequence of my injuſtice in his arms. Let once a happy reconciliation with him calm my conſcience, and then take me from the world; for then I ſhall expire with pleaſure, if I do but yield the ghoſt up on his boſom. It is now a long time ſince I firſt began to ſearch you out. For ever then be bleſſed the moment that reſtores you to me. Bleſſed too be the violent deſign *(looking at Simon)* with which you met me on the public road. What happineſs for me! what tranſport for the remnant of my days! Forgive me, my dear children. Pardon my ſeverity. I have been puniſhed for it long enough.

The FATHER. Let it no more be mentioned, I beſeech you. Enter our poor cottage. We ſtand all in need of ſome refreſhment.

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